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Contents

Men's and Women's Storytelling in a Hungarian Vlach Gypsy Community <i>Katalin Kovalcsik</i>	1
The Gypsies and Traditional Bulgarian Culture <i>Vesselin Popov</i>	21
Chronicle	
Sinclair Meets the Rom, 1902 <i>Albert Thomas Sinclair. Edited by Sheila Salo</i>	35
Book Reviews	
Az erdő anyja. Cigány mesék, hagyományok (Károlyi Bari) Le vėšeski dėj. Az erdő anyja című kötet eredeti, cigány nyelvű szövegei (Károlyi Bari) <i>Katalin Kovalcsik</i>	45
Ethnic Awareness and the School: An Ethnographic Study (Mary E. Andereck) <i>John Kearney</i>	48
Information for contributors	51

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Men's and Women's Storytelling in a Hungarian Vlach Gypsy Community

Katalin Kovalcsik

An analysis of tale-telling in the Vlach Gypsy community of Nagyecsed, Hungary is drawn from recording sessions with Mihály Rostás, a Churari Vlach Gypsy, and other storytellers. In Nagyecsed, tale-telling is mainly a form of men's entertainment. It becomes a community event through strict rules of behavior, through the use of a stock of elaborate speech formulas, and through compulsory audience participation. Women's interpretation is reserved, and they concentrate on the essentials of the content. They cannot tell stories at social gatherings where men are present. Women are important as storytellers mainly in the education of children. It is from the women that small children first hear simplified versions of the stories that they later learn from men to narrate at community events.

In Nagyecsed, a village of northern-eastern Hungary, there lives a Tserhari-Churari Vlach Gypsy community. Traditionally the men are either coppersmiths or deal in horses and cattle, while women, besides fortune telling, do temporary agricultural work. In the 1950s, as a result of police intervention, men took permanent jobs. Because industry in the countryside was not developed, and agriculture did not need much labor, they joined factories in Budapest as underpaid unskilled workers. They lived in workers' hostels and visited their families back home only on weekends. Traveling back and forth was detrimental to families, and destroyed traditions. Vlach Gypsy families had always traveled to sell their goods, but then the father, mother, and children were always together. In this new situation, the worker had to choose between staying at home to attend a family event and thus risking the loss of his job, or returning to the capital and risking the rupture of his family relationships. That is why in the 1970s the second generation of factory

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workers made efforts to move their families to the capital. Some of them managed to obtain so-called temporary lodgings (one room with kitchen, a shared toilet outside on the corridor) in run-down neighborhoods of the capital. In this way, by the 1980s, about one third of the Nagyecsed Gypsies became “people of the capital”. It was not rare to see elderly fathers living in workers’ hostels while their smarter children—making use of social subsidies—could become apartment owners after a few years’ work in Budapest.

In 1983 I met Mihály Rostás (born in 1937), a Nagyecsed Churari Vlach Gypsy, at a workers’ hostel in Budapest. He offered to recite his favorite tales in his spare time. As an ethnomusicologist, I had previously recorded only a few tales for the purpose of learning the language. However, the enthusiasm of Mihály Rostás and his relatives affected me as well. So that meeting became a friendship, and instead of recording a single tale, I began recording regularly. Over seven years I recorded the whole of Rostás’ repertory of tales, that is, 93 lengthy pieces, and several life stories that included folkloristic motifs. In the meantime I got to know the storyteller’s family, and while recording in Budapest and Nagyecsed I met his relatives and his friends as well. I did recordings with other tale-tellers as well, which permitted comparison with Rostás’ rich stock of tales of and provided a basis for analysis of storytelling traditions and style of interpretation. In *Mihály Rostás, A Gypsy Story Teller* (Grabócz and Kovalcsik 1988) I discussed the role and practice of storytelling in the Vlach Gypsy community, while Gábor Grabócz, who attended these recording sessions, dealt with the storyteller’s interpretation. The same work includes two lengthy tales.

Hungarians have utterly incorrect ideas about the intellectual culture of Vlach Gypsies. The lay reader’s information comes almost entirely from the writings of József Vekerdi, who examined Gypsy culture from the point of view of high culture and did not even try to understand the viewpoints of his informants. For instance, he claims in his summarizing study, *The Gypsy Folk Tale* (Vekerdi 1974), that “Linguistic facts (the poverty of vocabulary) explain the collector’s experience that in our country, every Gypsy storyteller is more at ease with telling stories in Hungarian than in Romany” (p.15). He refers to tale-telling as functional only in one paragraph. “The presence of a group of people gathering on the arrival of the collector creates—even if only temporarily—the necessary atmosphere, and as a result, the functional characteristic of the tale at the recording session becomes similar to its original role, when the tale is performed at an authentic occasion, at a wake, for example” (p.53). His only remark about the way these storytelling occasions occur is that “it hardly ever happens that the storyteller is interrupted” (p.54). About the structure of the tale he observes, that “a characteristic feature of their story is that elements of Hungarian tales are removed from their original context and transferred to different texts”(p.23), and “there are many ways of

alteration" (p.55) which he considers improvisation. All this he explains with "intellectual plainness" (p.24), and concludes that "without steady traditions culture does not exist" (p.25). In one of his later works he states that "[storytelling] died out before our very eyes in the seventies" (Vekerdi 1985, English version, vol. 2:23). Vekerdi's opinion has never been contradicted officially by Hungarian ethnographers, and because he was highly respected, for over twenty five years he was not refuted. That is why a new generation of researchers could not develop. But I felt that I could not miss the opportunity to get acquainted with the material of a storyteller who stated at our first meeting—expressing his displeasure that I could speak mainly the Lovari dialect—that he could not tell stories in Hungarian.

My work was greatly facilitated by the fact that soon after I had met Mihály Rostás, all the Nagyecsed people became familiar with our acquaintance. Many expressed their opinions of him, they suggested which stories I should ask him about, or on the other hand, advised me to ask someone other than he about certain stories. They told me about storytellers who were already dead, and compared their styles to that of Rostás. They asked about stories I had already recorded, and how I recorded them, and slowly the details started to form an overall picture about the storytelling concepts and traditions of the Nagyecsed people. In the present study, I shall describe one subject among these, concepts and practice in connection with the roles of men and women storytellers. However, first I will outline men's storytelling practice as a community event, more fully discussed in my earlier work (1988).

Men's Storytelling as a Community Event

In Nagyecsed, storytelling is mainly a form of men's entertainment, although women and children can be present at the event. Mihály Rostás heard his favorite stories on long winter evenings at home or at the local pub from his father, who gathered a big company of people around him on these occasions. The character of the event, according to witnesses, was very similar to that I have seen in the last few years in Nagyecsed. It becomes a community event through the following traits:

1. *Formal rules of behavior.* Men take seats in a semicircle and women either stand behind them or sit down in a separate group. Smaller children are held on their mother's laps while older ones sit on their father's laps or stand beside them. Men concentrate exclusively on the story, and don't do any working activity while the story is being told. If they still have something to do outside, they excuse themselves from the company, and after returning greet them again.¹ Meanwhile, women carry on with their regular household activities, and come and go. Nobody pays attention except when they disturb men with loud chatting or making noise with dishes; then

they are rebuked.² They never interfere with the story. If there is anything they don't understand, they ask their question in the breaks of the storytelling session.³

2. *Formal speech.* Three explanations are given for formal speech.

a) All the male participants of the event have to show respect. The participants interact with one another through polite formulas. For instance, they start almost every sentence with *aldil tut o drago Del* 'God bless you'. In this way they can't insult one another.

b) With formal speech they show that the event is occurring within the spirit of tradition. Emphasizing the "truth" is central. The story has to be true in the sense that it has to convey tradition (for example, they claim that *adi muři eredetiko taj čači paramiča, pal muřo jilo šindjilas* 'this true and old tale of mine was ripped out of my heart'), but at the same time it refers to real life as well. That is why when explaining the text, the "truth" of the tale and that of everyday life are carefully separated. The story has to be told in the Gypsy language, because you tell the "truth" in your mother tongue. (*Romane phenaj la!* 'I'm telling it in Romany', the story-teller often exclaims.) And finally, because the participants are "real" Gypsies (*čače Roma*), who understand the truth of the storyteller.⁴ These truths must be confirmed by some curse referring to the speaker and his family. For example, *te merau* 'May I die', *te meren muře šavoře* 'May my children die', if I tell a lie, that is.

c) The event is blessed by God. That is why at the beginning, at the end, and several times in the middle, the storyteller greets those who are present, commending them under the auspices of God. The most common formula is (*O drago Del t avel amenca*) 'God be with us'.

3. *Compulsorily active participation.* Storytelling is never a one-man performance, but counts on the participation of every man. The attention of the listener can be expressed by frequently interrupting the speaker and giving one's opinion. The Gypsies call this "catching" (*xuteripo*). The listener "catches" the story-teller (*xutrel les*) if he "tells a lie" (*xoxavel*). However, only fragments of these "lies" refer to the actual text of the tale. "Catching" is rather for everybody's amusement, it expresses the spirit and the "truth" of being together. The storyteller always has a partner who controls him best. Because from time to time everybody interrupts the story, for the outsider it might resemble a big fight where the participants often defend their truth by yelling and rolling their eyes. The storyteller not only tells but performs the tale. In his speech he uses a wide range of dynamism from whispering to spine-chilling screams. Also his body is in constant motion. Most important are the hands which don't rest even for a second. Even at the calmest parts, loose movements of the wrist give emphasis to the content. As excitement grows, body gestures become more and more diverse. The speaker bites his mustache, turns his hat or dashes it to the ground. He frequently jumps up to perform certain scenes: he

salutes, he marches, or he embraces the person next to him as his imaginary sweetheart, and so forth.⁵

A typical “catching” is shown in the following fragment. Rostás is telling a story with another man, Gyuszi. Scarcely has he begun the first sentence when his partner interrupts. But the discussion is pursued according to the highest standards of Gypsy politeness.

MR: Has kathar nà, *hetetlen héjt ország ellen*, pe parnji lùma, kanak e lùma kezdisàjljas, vi p odi majdur, has edj čōrò manùš.

Gy: More! Jertis te xutràù ande tji vòrba?

MR: T aves baxtalò taj sasto!

Gy: Taj has othe nà numa edj čōrò! Has othe mēg vì duj!

MR: D and odo gàù numa edj čōrò has, aldìl tut o Dèl!

Gy: Ado kherè phenes?

MR: And odo gàù! Num edj čōrò manùš has!

Gy: *Persze!* Ak ab akàrde na žanàù so te phenàù.

MR: Once upon a time, far away, behind the beyond, on this wide world, when the world began to exist, or even beyond that, there was a poor man.

Gy: My friend! Would you excuse me if I interrupt? [literally: if I catch you in your word]

MR: Be lucky and healthy!

Gy: Well, there was not only one poor man there! But there were two there!

MR: But in that village there was only one poor man, may God bless you!

Gy: Are you talking about our village?

MR: That village! There was only one poor man there!

Gy: Ah, sure! Then I don't have anything else to say about it.

This interruption might not make any sense to an outsider. However, Gyuszi, being a good partner, wants to confirm his “presence” right at the beginning. He cannot wait until the storyteller asks him, because that would prove his lack of attention. The role of the interruption is to compare the world of the tale to the experience of the present time where—as a “truth of real life”—there is more than “only one poor man” in the villages. The situation of “one village—one poor man” can be characteristic only of a tale, it can be “truth” within the story. Gyuszi admits that and withdraws.

We can thus see that men's storytelling has its own rules where women cannot have a role. Let's see now what the opinion of the Nagyecsed people is about that, and what distinction they make between men's and women's storytelling.

Opinions About Men's and Women's Storytelling

Mihály Rostás has always performed his stories in a spectacular way, in great detail. Having finished a story, while we discussed what we had heard, he often mentioned details which had not been included in the story. When I asked him if he had forgotten about them, he became highly embarrassed. I was sure that it was not absentmindedness, for he "prepared" thoroughly in advance every time. Although at each session he first made me read out the list of tales already told, then those yet untold, to which he occasionally added—as he said—new "story titles," it was clear that he had thought over beforehand the tales to be told. The lengthy consideration was only a game which he substituted for the events of functional storytelling. That is, on "natural" storytelling occasions, he demanded much persuasion before starting the story, and for a long time one didn't know which story he would finally tell. Recording the whole stock of stories took such a long time because he contacted me only when he was really in the mood to tell a tale, often after several months. "So, I made it clear," he finally admitted, embarrassed, and explained what it was all about. On other occasions, when we returned to a certain tale several times, or when I re-recorded a tale, it turned out that there were unaltered motifs as well as motifs that he used in different ways, that is, motifs that he explained differently on different occasions. My questions about this also made him quite embarrassed. It took me some time to conclude that my questions were typical "feminine" questions, and his embarrassment did not mean that he admitted a mistake. Rather, he was embarrassed because he could not reprove me the way he could reprove interfering female members of his family. And on the other hand, his explanation could not be similar to an explanation he would give at home, because I would not pass these tales on to my children, so it would be useless to give me those gently condescending explanations they give to respectfully asking women. Because I noticed how impolite he thought I was, I gave up asking these questions. Instead I tried to observe how he tells the same stories differently, and how women tell them. He always talked about women telling tales with slight disdain, saying that they only tell "those short ones". Women I asked had similar opinions. But when I asked them to tell one of those "short ones" they became embarrassed like Rostás. These shorter tales weren't less eventful than those considered to be men's stories. In fact I recorded several of the tales I had heard from Rostás before. These variants were more precise and less detailed in content. According to women the difference is that they "can't talk so well," but they "put everything necessary into the tale." A young

man in Nagyecsed, while not a relative of Rostás, confided in me because of my love of tales and talked to me about the differences. “When I am listening to the stories of Uncle Mihály, I feel like a man, you know, grown up. When I am listening to my mother telling tales to my children, I feel like a child.” He thinks that women are “stuck with telling stories in a literal way. Men run wild, they pursue this or that by-plot, and talk about that. They tease one another, that’s how they have fun. They don’t ask questions about the story, but about things that are interesting.” Based on my experience, I assumed that handling the text with greater flexibility is a characteristic of men’s storytelling, while women are expected to tell these tales with more precision. Accordingly, the use of formal speech and behavior elements is a privilege of men. I became certain of this in January 1991, when I managed to arrange a session at which Rostás told a story together with his eldest daughter-in-law Janya at her apartment in Budapest. This event was recorded in video and sound.⁶

A Storytelling Session with Mihály Rostás and Janya

Rostás originally wanted to have Janya’s father beside him, but he was not available. Rostás then suggested replacing him with his daughter-in-law, because he respects her as well thanks to her father who is a good storyteller. Janya’s husband Mihály, one of his brothers along with his wife Katica, and the grandchildren attended the recording session as well. Rostás’ feelings toward Janya are ambivalent. On the one hand, her father is a good storyteller, so the girl, with her knowledge of her father’s stories, is competition. On the other hand, Janya does not hide her abilities as a storyteller, which offends her father-in-law. According to him, his other daughter-in-law, Katica, represents correct manners, because she is more compliant and hides her abilities from him. Janya tried to persuade Katica to tell a story with her father-in-law, but she refused very gently. She told about how they had told stories together when her father-in-law was staying with Janya and he went to visit her:

K: Sorro djès amen dujžējnè amen othè žikathar o dījlo ži *négyóráig* paramičāzindjām dujžējnè.

J: Mlšto kerdjan tumen. Na vuricinèn tumen.

K: Na. Mè taj voj dujžējnè. Opr àulja, kaj tùte has.

J: Phèn hat akkor tù.

K: Me na žanaų, numa vòj phenlas mange. Taj pušòs, hodj adi savl, adi savl. Phenlas edj-edj rīslèto andrāl. Vl po trolivo paramičāzindjam.



Mihály Rostás telling a story.

K: Every day, the two of us, we told stories there until four in the morning.
 J: Good for you. (At least) you are not bored.
 K: No. Him and me, the two of us. He came when he was staying with you.
 J: Then you should tell it.
 K: I can't, only he told me. And I kept asking what this was and what that was.
 He told a few details from that. We told stories even on the trolley.

So seemingly Katica does not know anything. Janya showed reluctance for a while, saying she was not a good "partner," she could not "interrupt" the way her father could. Nevertheless she fulfilled her father-in-law's request. He explained to her how she should "catch" him, which he thought was the main point of the event. It immediately turned out that the storyteller "argues" not with Janya but with her absent father:

MR: Adì e Fèdjvereš Mārtonèski.
 J: Hat me Gùjāš Peter šundjom.
 MR: No dikhès, athè xoxadjà tjo dad, ke ado Fèdjvereš Mārton has.
 J: Azìr has Gùjāš Peter, ke vì lesko dad po gùji losarlas.
 MR: *Így van*, d ado Fèdjvereš Mārton has.
 J: No. *Éjs* mulja lesko dād, ado meg pèrdal lja lesko...
 MR: *Igen. Éjs* kàj žal ado?
 J: Ta la roùljaha indulil apoj *világot próbálni*.
 MR: Sò kerel, sò kerel? No sò kerel ado Gùjāš Pējter akkor vadj o Fèdjvereš Mārton?
 J: Hat indulìl te žàl te Tòdel peske majlāši sàkma, sar odo gujaššàgo, ke voj nà pe guja sùletindjās, hanem voj edj zuralò manùš hi...
 MR: No mišto-j, nà xoxaų, tu kadè xoxaves, sar tjo dād. Dosta-j, àš, halgatìn!

MR: This is the Armed Martin (story).
 J: Well, I heard it was Peter Herdsman.
 MR: You see, your father lied here, because it was Armed Martin.
 J: It was Peter Herdsman, because even his father looked after the herd.
 MR: That's right, but (still) he was Armed Martin.
 J: Well, his father died and he took over [being the herdsman].
 MR: Yes. And where does this (boy) go?
 J: Well, he starts with his stick to try his fortune.

MR: What does he do, what does he do? So what does this Peter Herdsman or Armed Martin do?

J: Well, he sets off to find a better job than being a herdsman, because he was not born for that, but he is a strong person...

MR: Well, then, don't lie, you lie the same way as your father. That's enough, stay silent, don't talk!

The storyteller can haul his daughter-in-law over without any problem, as he could not do with another man. Janya was right about the plot of the tale, but she told only the content and did not "tell the tale". He soon got annoyed with it. Facing a man, he would have excused himself to interrupt, and would have asked permission to continue. Actually, he might have urged the other man to continue the tale if he knew it so well. But all that is not an obligation toward a woman.

He interrupted the tale every five or ten minutes so that Janya could ask questions. After a while she was encouraged to the extent that she dared interrupt. Her interruption as a listener took the following forms.

1. Confirming that she understood the story well. These remarks were welcomed by the storyteller, but he nearly turned these formulas of respect against her. After thanking her, he made a sarcastic remark.

MR: D o Kìralj Kiš Miklouš oprè-j po kâš.

J: Andrè has-lo mohošitimè.

MR: Ab andrè has-lo mohošodij. Čačè-j. No! Najisaràu take, kaj aųrì egěsitìs muři paramlča. Numa na xoxàu!

MR: But Little King Nicholas is up on the tree.

J: He was mossy.

MR: He was already mossy. Indeed. Well! Thank you for adding to my tale. But don't lie!

2. She knows a certain part differently. On these occasions, a fiery dispute developed, but in a few minutes an agreement was reached. The next instance is the continuation of the previous text. Janya thinks that Armed Martin transformed Little King Nicholas into a mossy tree-branch. On the contrary, according to Rostás, he only put him up in a tree where he got "mossy" from all that waiting. During the long discussion not even a single formula of politeness is pronounced. Rostás' phrase "May I die if you're not telling a lie" is rather offensive. He is so sure that his partner is "telling a lie".

MR: Taj lèl akanāke, šavāle, udji žal pālè, dikhèl, hodj o Kìralj Kiš Miklouš andrè-j mohošodimè.

— Ày tējlè, mufo drāgo phràl!

J: Pe lèste phurdja, v àthe xoxaves! Pe lèste phurdja, tējle gilja pal leste odo...

MR: Vorbāke kade ātkozinlas les mīndīg, hodj addig...

J: Pe lèste phurdjas, ke sūnto manùš has. Tējlè mohošisajle pal lest odol kòrci, ke kaštèske mohošitindjà les. Nà xoxav!

MR: Na kaštèske, k oprè, oprè, hodj...

J: Kaštèske, kor na dīččolās, hodj othe manùš hi.

MR: Hat nà žannās, na dikhnās, *igen*.

J: K andrè has v ando kaštà korcošitimè.

MR: Nāj čāče, xoxavès! Te merày, te na xoxaves!

J: Pe lèste phurdjas, taj olvadindjà tējlè pal lest odo... Taj sālindjà tējlè o...

MR: Nāj čāče, xoxavès! Te merày, te na xoxaves!

J: No, ža akkor mājdür!

MR: And then sets off, the boy [Armed Martin], he goes back and sees that Little King Nicholas is mossy.

— Come down dear brother!

J: He blew at him, you lie here as well! He blew at him, and that [crust] came off him.

MR: He cursed him with words, so that he can't [move until he gets back].

J: He only blew at him because he was a holy person. Those crusts mossed [= melted] off him, because he mossed him as a tree. Don't lie!

MR: Not as a tree, because he only [put him] up, so that [he could not move].

J: As a tree, because then nobody could see there was someone there.

MR: Well, they did not know, they did not see, indeed.

J: Because he was crusted into those trees.

MR: Not true, you are lying! May I die if you are not lying!

J: He blew at him, and that [crust] melted off him. And he got down [from the tree].

MR: Not true, you are lying! May I die if you are not lying!

J: Well, continue then!

At the same time the storyteller asked his listener questions, too. These were so-called test questions. Did Janya know the previous detail as he has told it? Does she know the following as he does? And finally, did Janya's father teach her the tale

correctly?

MR: Phèn mange, kade phenel la tjo dād? De te meràṽ, te na phenej adì!

J: Te meràṽ, te na kadè phenèl la *pontrul-pontra*. Akkor me kathar žanòs la?! Phèn aba! Nà lestar te šundjomàs la?!

MR: Nà mandar šundjàn adi paramìča?

J: Nà bizonj, k ab akkor me žanòs la. Aba nà xoxaṽ dj ānjira!

MR: Mè xoxavaṽ?! Mārèl les o drāgo Deḷ, ko xoxavèl ande paramìča!

J: De m aba šundjòm la, *mielòtt* tu phendjàn la.

MR: Bāter! Hat numa mādar šaj šundjan adi paramìča. Hat tjo dād ando paramìči šel paramìči phenèl ānde jèkh.

J: H ab akanāk vi patjāṽ.

MR: Taj voj bārò...No ke nìš na žanlās, nà xoljaṽ, nìš na žanlās mišto te paramičāzil.

J: Na. Num muō nas sà pe leste žalās. Sako rājtjì mešèlìl.

MR: *Éjs* kò žanlās te paramičāzil ande Čèda?

J: O Pètruš taj voj.

MR: Tell me, does your father tell [this tale] the same way! But may I die if you don't tell me!

J: May I die if he does not tell it exactly like that! How would I know it otherwise?! Tell me! If I had not heard it from him?!

MR: Haven't you heard this tale from me?

J: Of course, not, 'cause then I would know it your way. Don't lie so much.

MR: Me, lying?! May God punish the one who lies in a story!

J: I had heard it before you told it.

MR: Amen! Well, you could only have heard this story from me. Well, your father tells a hundred tales in one.

J: Well, now I believe you.

MR: And he is a big... But he couldn't, don't be angry, he couldn't tell stories well.

J: No, only my marriage was always hard hit [by storytelling]. He tells stories every evening.

MR: And who else could tell stories in (Nagy)ecsed?

J: Petrus and him.

The storyteller plays cat-and-mouse with his daughter-in-law. He forces her to deny her father's abilities as a storyteller. In fact, he takes his revenge on his partner, who "let him down" despite the arrangements, and did not come for the long

awaited video recording. The woman lets him pursue his aim, which makes Rostás withdraw. He does not pronounce that her father a “big liar.” After that, Janya successfully diverts his attention from the topic by mentioning another storyteller. The conversation continued about former storytellers and their “celebration tales”, that is tales told at celebratory events.

Finally, the following detail illustrates the differences of their storytelling style. First we should look at Janya’s version.

Taj soqlalıl e kăver:

— Hat—phenel—de mēng odi khānci. Aql edj šošoj. Kàmla o Kìralj Kiš Mikloş te puşkıl les. De nà e šošoj puşkılna, hanem pès puşkıl ando jilò. De t àyla kaso manùş, kon lèla lestar e pùška, taj dumèsa lisàyla taj puşkılna les, akkor tējle puşkıl les *egylövésbül*. De ko šunèl la taj phènlà la, žiko maškàr t avel ando bār.

And the second (raven) talks:

— Well—it says—this is nothing yet. A rabbit comes. Little King Nicholas wants to shoot it. But he doesn’t shoot the rabbit, but he shoots himself at the heart. But if there will be someone who takes the gun from him, he turns his back (to the rabbit) and shoots that way, then he could hit it at the first shot. But anyone who hears this and tells it (to other people), may he turn into stone up to the waist.

Janya tells this part of the tale in a clear, clever way. Now let’s hear the same detail from her father-in-law.

Avèn trīn hollòuvi. Hollōzinen:

— Hēj, de zijand hi! Lingrèn la—phenel. —Àyla—phenel—edj šošoj. Dèla o Kìralj Kiš Mikloş te puşkıl les. Nà e šošoj puşkılna, hanem voj pès puşkılna ando šējrò. De ko šunèl t aqrì phenel, žiko phābajà t avel ando bār.

Three ravens come. They croak:

— Hey, too bad! She is taken [the bride from Little King Nicholas]—says. —He is coming —says—a rabbit. Little King Nicholas prepares to shoot it. But he doesn’t shoot the rabbit, but shoots himself in the head. But may anyone who hears it and tells it (to other people) turn into stone up to the knees.

The storyteller does not think it necessary to tell how it would be possible to avoid the death of the prince. He concentrates on the following part which is a long conversation between the two boys about who should have the princess: each wants to offer her to the other. (Janya did not even know about this part.) We get the missing information only when the rabbit appears:

Ha sar phendè, xuttjel opr o šošòj. Dèl o Kìralj Kiš Mikloṽš pal e jagaljì, hodj linkrel. Kako hăp-la taj vi linkrel la palal taj perel oprè o šošòj.

Well, as they said that, the rabbit jumps out. Little King Nicholas grabs his gun to shoot it. The other [Armed Martin] catches (the gun) and turns it back, and the rabbit falls.

The storyteller's description is very visual but succinctly expressed, so that he can go on to the following dialogue, where he can display his imagination. Janya's talk is concentrated, she uses only as much of the dialogue as necessary. She hardly raises her voice more than in everyday speech. Although she performs as well, she does it in a gentle voice, with fine gestures.

But what are the Rostás boys doing in the meantime? Although they are present, they don't intend to make her job easier in front of her father-in-law. The agreement was that Janya would be the partner. Both boys, even Janya's husband, respect their father's word. But when he interrupts, the rival is not "scolded."

Janya does not know that after a break in the story, the answer to the question of the story-teller, *Kaj mukhljom la?* 'Where did I stop?' should be, *Kajso bešes* 'Where you are sitting now'. The storyteller starts a long explanation, which, thanks to the clever interruption of his son, remains on the level of instruction.

MR: De sòstar phenèn adì o řomà, taj o phùre řoma sòstar phènnās *ezelöjìt*, hodj: Kaj mukhljàn e paramìčà? Kăj mukhljom la? Ke kanak aba na žanèl, hodj kăj mukhljà l, ab akkor xoxavèl. K aba na bīrlì te gindjìl, hodj kăj mukhljà la. De savò žanèl e paramìčà, taj vīgìg phenèl la, od odì phenèl, hodj: Kăjso bešàṽ.

M: Kade v òdo xoxamno manùš sas!

MR: Savò?

M: Odò, ko aṽri rakhljàs.

J: Adì na fedezlìl e valōṽšăgo.

MR: Sò?!

M: Hodj: Kăjso bešàṽ!

MR: E paramìč othè mukhèl, kăjso bešèl.

M: Ha šaj āšes v! tu! T aba āš oprè! T akkor v od! phenen, hodj:
Kājsō āšāy?

MR: Na! Hat num athè mukhljom e paramlča!

M: No?

MR: Athè mukhljom l āšindòs. Akkor n àthe mukhày la?

M: Hat akkor nà bešindos mukhes la!

MR: Hat de te bešāy, akkor nūma bešindos. Akkor kadè phenāy andrè,
hodj: Kāj mukhljom muři paramlča? Akkor od! phenen: Kājsō āšès
vadj kājsō bešès. No, rēndbe-j.

MR: But why do Gypsies say that, and why did the old Gypsies say before,
“Where did you stop with the story?” Or, “Where did I stop?” Because
if he doesn’t know where he stopped, then he is lying. Because he cannot
think where he stopped. But the one who knows the tale and tells it says,
“Where I am sitting.”

M: Well, that must have been a liar too!

MR: Which one?

M: The one who made it up.

J: It doesn’t correspond to reality.

MR: What!?

M: That, “Where I am sitting!”

MR: He stops with the tale where he is sitting.

M: Well, you can stand up, as well! So stand up! And then do they say,
“Where I am standing?!”

MR: Well, did I stop the tale here?

M: Well [then]?

MR: I stopped it standing here. So, didn’t I stop it here?

M: Then you don’t stop it sitting !

MR: But if I am sitting, then sitting. Then I say, “Where did I stop my tale?”
Then they reply, “Where you are standing.” Or, “Where you are sitting.”
Well, it’s OK.

On this one occasion, Mihály Rostás Jr. defended his wife, pretending to be naive. Because of his ignorance, his father treats him as a child. He doesn’t respect him with any of the formulas. At the same time, he makes a concession, too. He includes in his set of formulas his son’s expression “where you are standing”. Still, this conversation shows the characteristics of a manly “catch.” Janya could not have dared to argue so skilfully.

The Role of Women as Storytellers

Earlier we saw that storytelling where the “partner” of the speaker is a woman can occur only under artificial circumstances, and it might have painful consequences for the woman who is too “brave.” A male storyteller doesn’t have polite phrases for a female audience. The addressees are always “boys” (*šavale*). The tale together with good wishes is addressed to them and only to them. These same formulas are used at other community events as well (for example at weddings and holidays), but then they are extended to all the family members. For instance, *T aldil tumen o drago Del tjumare čaladonca kethane!* ‘May God bless you together with your families!’ However, at storytelling sessions families are not mentioned at all.

The unified opinion of the Nagyecséd people is that women may not tell stories at all in the company of men. A woman is allowed to sing only if her husband starts the song, then she can join in. Alone, she can sing only if her husband asks permission. For example: *Engedelmo mangaŋ, řomale, t avas vuře taj baxtale, řaj kerel muři řomnji amari voja!* ‘I’m asking for permission, Gypsies, let us be pure and lucky, let my wife entertain us!’⁷ This formula is used during storytelling when reference is made to sexuality: *Jertjinen, šavale, t avas vuře taj baxtale, ande paramičate-j!* ‘Forgive me, boys, let us be pure and lucky, that’s how it is in the story!’ After that the storyteller refers to the sex act briefly. The reference need not even be to actual sexuality. It is enough to mention some underwear (for example the main character fastens his pants), or forced nakedness (for example he is attacked by burglars and he remains there in “a single pair of pants”).

The question arises why singing together permits more “impurity,” more active participation of women, that is, than does storytelling. According to those interviewed, songs reflect “inner feelings” better than tales. Indeed, in tales, only indirect references can be made to personal aspects which are overtly expressed in songs. Considering that these things are important for the family and the community, women must be given a chance as well to express their problems publicly in the community. The only opportunity to do so which is more elevated than everyday life is singing together, *čaći vorba* ‘true speech’.⁸ What is told by women at these occasions is considered by men. To give only one example, a woman in Nagyecséd put the following words into her song when she wanted to reconcile her grown sons.

Kana merla tji dejojři
Tu řutin tje phralořfen
Řutin, Deřla, řutin
Řutin aba vi le řandoreske.

Žutin, fiam, žutin
 Numa laša vorbaha
 Tu han o majphuro
 Tuke hi te sittjares len.

When your mother is dead
 You should help your brothers
 Help, my God, help
 Help Sandor.
 Help, my son, help
 But only with kind words
 You are the eldest
 You have to teach them.

Although I don't know whether the brothers were reconciled or not, everybody was touched by the sincere "speech" of the woman.

Another shared opinion, the truth of which still needs to be investigated, is that women don't tell stories among themselves either. Expressing respect is an obligation only to a lesser extent; it is expected mainly towards woman guests. But "catching" has an important role in other genres, in improvised conversations about different topics. These genres, existing mainly within the relationship of women and women, or mother and child, are based on reality, and its imaginary world remains within the frames of real life as well. Its subjects can be mutual experience, expected events of the future, or reviving tradition.⁹ Zita Réger and Jean Berko Gleason illustrate with examples of actual dialogue how Vlach Gypsy children are "caught," that is teased, mainly with riddles, and how such interactions have an important role in their social acceptance of the traditional values of the community. "It represents an effective means of teaching children the fixed body of knowledge necessary to become a competent member of their community" (Réger and Gleason 1991: 612).

It seems that for both sexes it is determined where and how they can use this method. For example, I have witnessed several times married couples "discussing" tales, that is, recalling certain parts of them. This always happened in an intimate style. The discussion was a real dialogue, none of them started to act, to perform the tale, that is. Although they asked each other testing questions, an argument never developed. I have also heard an instance where a conversation about tales helped the couple reconcile with one another, helped to ease tension. This becomes more believable when compared with my experience of seeing Rostás change his behavior when he asked Janya to tell a story herself. His former aggression turned into tenderness, familiar from his storytelling with Katika. Because he asked the woman, his role became similar to that of a teacher who wants to encourage his

diligent student with appreciation. "Yes, that is right," he kept saying, and where he disagreed, he accepted that she had learned it from her father in a different way. His behavior was similar on those occasions where he talked to other women in his family about traditions, for example, "what do we do" at Christmas, New Year's, etc. These conversations are harmonious. Both of the parties have happy faces, for they don't have to be alert, they know that the other accepts his or her words with benevolence. The thought of "catching" the other does not even occur.

At certain community events, for example at a wake, where men and women are separated, both sexes use the means of "catching," only in a different genre. While men "catch" each other while storytelling, women entertain themselves by "catching" on topics from real life. The same young man from Nagyecsed said, "At wakes, when I am bored with the company of men, I go over to the women. They tease each other with these sexual topics. For example, there is a widow, she doesn't have a husband, so they make a match for her. There is laughter there, they talk about all kinds of things. Men don't do things like that, or maybe if there is a retarded person, they would tease him."¹⁰

What can the role of woman storytellers be then? An elderly woman, who regularly tells tales to her small grandchildren, and who had then recorded two so-called "short" stories, told me, "Whenever my father didn't feel like telling stories, we kept bothering my mother. Then she told us these short ones." One of the "short" ones was an animal tale, the other one was a story of origin about how the devils became "evil". Both belong to a genre which is not told in a company of men. Because these stories could have been recorded only after a long time, keeping it a secret, we can assume that these typical feminine tales are considered to have lower status, and thus are shameful. Woman storytellers prefer to tell collectors the tales of men, which they tell, as already described, with precision and without formal speech elements. From the above description we find that men are willing to tell stories not only in company but also at home if they have time and they are in the mood. The mother's or grandmother's role as a storyteller depends as well on how good a storyteller her husband is. Generally, those women tell more tales whose husbands are less enthusiastic about tale-telling. This kind of woman would tell men's tales as well as the women's ones in addressing children. So it is not surprising that several young men, although they were moved by the memory of their mother's tales, couldn't recall the plots of these "short" tales. They think that these tales have a role in early childhood, at the age of semi-consciousness. As the boy grows older, he listens instead to his father's or other men's tales. There he can add to his repertory as well as learn the performance style through which he will be able to tell his tales "correctly", that is, to turn the tale into a "true story" at community events when he grows up.

Notes

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¹Stewart (1989: 87) says the same about community singing.

²Rostás, for example, on one occasion of community storytelling, rebuked a woman making noise with the dishes, *T aves baxtalji taj sastevestji!* 'Be lucky and healthy!' His intonation showed that here this common greeting phrase became a means of reprimand. Stewart also mentions an instance when women chatting in the kitchen disturbed the men singing together. When they called them to order, with, *Phenel peski vorba!* 'He's making his speech!', the women became silent (Stewart 1987b: 239).

³Once the storyteller's wife remarked loudly on one of the details of the story. The men became paralyzed, everybody looked at the storyteller. Then, in a loud voice, he asked the woman "who forgot herself" to leave.

⁴Stewart drew similar conclusions about singing together in another Hungarian Vlach Gypsy community. "Three conventions about the songs are frequently stressed: that they be in Romany; that they be Gypsy-like in content and style, i.e. *řomane*; and that they should be *řaře* that is 'true', in the sense of referring to events that have really taken place" (Stewart 1987a: 52).

⁵For more detail see the study of Gábor Grabócz in Grabócz and Kovalcsik 1988: 184-188.

⁶The video recording was made by my colleague István Németh.

⁷According to Stewart, at the gatherings of men (*mulatřago*), women could not be present either. He mentions only one exception, and gives an explanation for that. "There is the occasional exception to this norm. One popular and wealthy man will not sing unless accompanied by his wife who attends *mulatřago*-s but the woman in question is in her mid-fifties and had her last child 16 years ago. Since her sexuality and fertility is now not an important part of her social personality, her presence does not weaken the idea that women in general ought to stay away" (Stewart 1987b: 240).

It seems that the idea of "brotherhood" described by him is demonstrated by the formulas of the Nagyecsed people in an even more primary way. This "brotherhood" wants to leave out of men's gatherings any form of sexuality, the main source of which is the woman. The word *voja* (merriment) in the formula of asking for permission is one of the synonyms of *mulatřago*.

⁸"True speech" is a collective designation for a told or sung version of events or thoughts considered "true" (that is, believable) of the Gypsy community or its members; it contains formal speech elements. The slow song is especially suitable

for conveying these because singing is the most important part of social gatherings; in fact, the expression “true speech” can be regarded as one of the synonyms of the slow song. “Listen to me, I’m going to tell you some true speech!” or: “Tell us your true speech!” can often be heard before a song is begun.

⁹Similar dialogues are shown by text No 15-16 in Vekerdi 1985, vol. 1:120-130. No.15. is an improvised dialogue between the bride’s and the bridegroom’s mothers preparing for the wedding. Besides the preparation and the events of the wedding, they talk about the possible future of the couple (for example, how diligent they would be, if they would stay together, etc.). No.16 is based on a tale where, at a certain point, the storytelling woman initiates a dialogue between herself and her sister, and then her sister takes over her role. The subject of the dialogue is to slightly cheat their husbands by spending some money on having fun.

¹⁰A separate study should deal with why there can’t be any “perverse” words in men’s tales told at the wake while women entertain themselves with sexual subjects.

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The Gypsies and Traditional Bulgarian Culture

Vesselin Popov

In studying the contacts and mutual influences between Gypsies and Bulgarians, which are a result of their long life together from the Middle Ages to the present, one must take into account both Gypsy and non-Gypsy ethnocultural systems and the basic characteristics of their historical development. "Gypsy" figures in Bulgarian folk culture and Gypsy adoption of Bulgarian folk ritual are analyzed. The paper finds that a "hot" culture system, that of the Gypsies, preserves certain forms of a "cold" culture, that of the Bulgarians, showing that cultural interactions may be extremely diverse and may sometimes lead to unexpected consequences.

Gypsies and Bulgarians have lived together for centuries. The first documentary historical information concerning the Gypsy population in Bulgarian territory goes back to the 14th century¹ while the coexistence of the Bulgarians and Gypsies in the Ottoman Empire (15th to 19th centuries) is confirmed by numerous historical references (see Todorov 1972).

Such a long period of common life of Gypsies and Bulgarians influences their corresponding ethnocultural systems. All studies of the relationships and reciprocal influences of Gypsies and Bulgarians must consider the characteristics of their ethnocultural systems, reflected in the actual functional mechanisms of these systems. For this purpose it seems very useful to draw on Claude Levi-Strauss' (1983) distinction of cultural types, "hot" cultures and "cold" cultures.

When we analyze the typical elements of a given ethnocultural system we must first define the problems related to its typology, that is, what type of culture it is. On the historical and cultural level the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people is defined as a specific type—Christian and rural—of popular culture of the

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Bulgarian ethnos in the conditions existing within the Ottoman Empire (V. Popov 1990). After the establishment of Ottoman rule in the Bulgarian territory, the whole life of the Bulgarians was intentionally "closed" within the framework of the rural community and isolated from the dominant "official" culture, which was alien to the Bulgarian people in both religious and ethnic respects. A result of the unfavorable external factors were the so-called "emergency conditions" of the functioning of culture (Belousov 1971). These "emergency conditions" made it possible for the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people to preserve and in certain instances to restore a number of older, archaic traits and characteristics.

The central concept of life and its accompanying type of cognitive and behavioral system are especially important. In Bulgarian traditional culture the ideology of traditionalism is such a central concept. In the conditions of this culture this concept permeates the individual's mode of thought, as well as all his activities and their consequences. The initial and final motivation for any decision is expressed by invoking the past: "we used to do it that way," "our ancestors used to do it like this." Of course, this culture remains neither absolutely immutable and stereotyped (every stereotype has a certain degree of variation) nor completely closed. While novelties are constantly introduced, they undergo transformations and are affirmed through the categories and models of the particular culture, that is, the novelties become an integral part of it and can be explained only within its general context.

An analysis of the characteristics discussed above leads us to define traditional Bulgarian culture as a cold culture. According to Levi-Strauss, all archaic cultures, as well as certain strata of the "unofficial" culture in the traditions of modern times, are cold. In those cultures the transmission over time of the principal mythopoetic "texts" (in the semiotic sense) is basically already constituted (Lévi-Strauss 1983). But I should stress that traditional Bulgarian culture does not represent a classic type of cold culture, that what we have here is not an absolute identity, but more of an analogy based on the resemblance of the functional mechanisms and transmission of this culture over time. This analogy allows us to speak of Bulgarian traditional culture as a cold culture, while acknowledging that the use of this term is not unconditional. We have to account for these characteristics of the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people in order to be able to understand the principles of the penetration and acceptance into this culture of the separate elements of the ethnocultural system of the Gypsies. In this way we can isolate to some extent the principles of reciprocal contacts and influences of two ethnocultural systems as different as those of Bulgarians and Gypsies.

Here I will not deal with those everyday reciprocal contacts and influence of Bulgarians and Gypsies which are expressed by the adoption by the Bulgarian population of certain craft technologies or their products, or of different forms of

entertainment. Among the Gypsy "cultural donors" on that level are the Agupti (smiths), Burgudžii (farriers), Kalaidžii or Kelderari, Lingurari or Kopanari (whose trades are the manufacture of spoons, spindles, and so forth), Košničari (basket makers), Četkari (brush makers), Grebenari (comb makers), Ursari (bear trainers), Maimundžii (monkey trainers), musician-Gypsies, and so on (Marushiakova 1991). I find more interesting the traces of Gypsy cultural influence that can be found within the more conservative elements of the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people, in beliefs and superstitions, festivals and rituals, as well as in folklore. These influences are indirect; we do not find the adoption of concrete forms of the ethnocultural system of the Gypsies, but the appearance and imposition of the "Gypsy" figure in the context of traditional phenomena of the Bulgarian culture.

"Gypsy" figures are relatively common in the traditional carnival, especially among the *koukeri* players, (V. Popov 1987). In eastern Thrace the *koukeri* present their rituals in the center of the village. Among the characters in these rituals we find several "Gypsies in rags" (in torn clothes) (Arnaudov 1972:21, 25), a "Gypsy grandmother," or a "Gypsy couple" (Arnaudov 1972:27). During similar events in Rhodope "Gypsies" (represented with blackened faces) or "a Gypsy woman with a baby" (the "baby" is a special doll) participate (Arnaudov 1972:38-39). In northeast Bulgaria the central figure, the "*koukeri* mother" is called "Gypsy" (Marinov 1981:512). "The Gypsies" have a primary role in the enlarged variant of the *koukeri* plays in the village of Touria, where the "death and rebirth of a camel" is represented, and where the leader of the camel, his wife (with a "little one") and most of the participants are "Gypsies" (Kraev 1979:154, 165).

More rarely the figures of the Gypsy man and woman are present in popular beliefs, songs, and tales. Thus for example, according to traditional Bulgarian belief the plague is an old, black, ugly woman in old clothes who sometimes appears as an old Gypsy woman (Slaveikov 1924:107; Petkova 1990:56), or is drawn on a cart by Gypsies (Petkova 1990:57). In an epic song Gurgia Samodiva, whom Krali Marco meets and with whom he later fights, also takes the form of an old Gypsy woman (Romanska 1971:823).

"Gypsies" occur in folk tales. In anecdotes about life they assume the role of tricksters, as well as that of fools (Dinekov and Stoikova 1963). Sometimes they are also the main figures or antagonists in fantastic tales (Karaliitchev and Văltchev 1963). Here, owing to the specific characteristics of the genre, as well as the influences of cultural realities and the realities of life, the Gypsy figures have undergone considerable development, and so will not be analyzed further.

Considering the content and particularities typical of the traditional culture of the people, there is no doubt that the Gypsy figures appeared relatively late on a more ancient foundation. It is obvious that, while based on archaic prototypes, these figures follow and reflect the historical contacts between the Bulgarians and

Gypsies during the years of their coexistence. These figures do not represent an artistic echo of historical reality, nor do they appear in a void, but are forms of conservation and reproduction in life of archaic beliefs present in traditional customs, rituals, and folkloric works. They are imposed upon archaic prototypes of the past with new traits and additional characteristics. These new traits and particulars are (at least to a certain degree) characteristic of the Gypsies and familiar to the Bulgarians. At the same time they preserve their semantic status, as well as the functions corresponding to these prototypes in the total context of the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people. In other words, the "level of expression" is modified, but "the level of content" is preserved.

I emphasize that the Gypsy figures are neither unimportant nor separate from the unfolding of the carnival customs mentioned. On the contrary, these customs express on a large scale archaic ideas and symbols first presented there. Doubtless we may seek the historical roots of the "*koukeri* mother," or its variant, "the Gypsy with little one," in the ancient cult of the mother goddess, a fertility symbol. The connection with fertility is supported, for example, by the belief that the peasant who succeeds in stealing the "*koukeri* mother" and locking her in his house will be assured of a good harvest the entire year (Marinov 1981:512). Survivals of other ancient cults and beliefs may be discovered in the figures of the "Gypsy couple," which may be compared with the so-called sacred marriage; "the Gypsy woman with baby" (that is, the idea of the "new birth"); and the "camel who dies and is reborn," which may be compared with the idea of periodic renewal of the world reflected in the antique worship of the god who dies and is reborn.

In the traditional Bulgarian culture the *koukeri* plays have several functions apart from assuring natural and economic well-being. Through their participation in the plays the young receive permission to marry. The acquisition of a new social status represents a passage to a higher stage in the process of socialization, directly comparable to archaic initiations. According to the dominant beliefs typical of archaic culture, during a given period the initiates leave their previous social structure and cultural space, come in contact with chthonic forces, undergo various tests outside society and after a ritual purification return to society, now having a new social and cultural status (Meletinskii 1976:226). During the *koukeri* plays the contacts and temporary participation of the young initiates in the chthonic world are expressed in various ways, for example through the "Gypsy" figures. The "Gypsies" dressed in rags, with soot-blackened faces—these elements, taken from the real daily life of Gypsies (distinctive clothing, darker complexion), are, in the context of the Bulgarian traditional concept of life, semantically connected with the culturally unregulated otherworld, the world of evil spirits.

The same mechanism which expresses membership in or at least some tie with the chthonic forces also helps explain why the plague, according to traditional

concepts, and Gurgia Samodiva can appear in the epic folk poetry in the person of the "old Gypsy woman" ("the black Gypsy," "the ragged Gypsy," and so forth). According to the rules of Bulgarian traditional culture the plague (like all personified illnesses in general) and *samodivi* belong to the otherworld, the world of evil spirits (Gheorgieva 1983 ;110-137). In this case this connection is further intensified, that is, it becomes clearer and more comprehensible through the figure of the "old Gypsy woman." Here the principles of the multiplication of semantic status are in operation. "The old woman," like all Gypsies in general, is thought to have supernatural powers due to her contacts with the evil spirits (R. Popov 1985). An example is the song motif "the mother-in-law buys poison herbs from the Gypsy women in order to confuse her son and daughter-in-law" (Tcholakov 1872).

The traditional Bulgarian beliefs in the magical supernatural powers of Gypsies and the idea of Gypsy ties to evil spirits are founded to a certain degree on the realities of daily life. Gypsy women of various nomadic or sedentary groups told fortunes, sold medicinal or magical herbs, performed black magic or neutralized it. These beliefs concerning Gypsies in general are widespread and that is reflected in the comparatively rare cases of Gypsy smiths' active participation in certain traditional Bulgarian customs and rituals. For example, the iron tongs placed in the coffin to prevent the dead from becoming vampires must be forged at night by an entirely naked Gypsy smith. A Gypsy smith takes part in the "living fire" ritual for curing or people and animals as well. It is the smith and his wife who make the fire by rubbing together two dry logs on a Friday night. At that fire the smith then forges the bar with which the cattle are branded. The Gypsy smith and his wife are invited as special guests to the ritual meal of boiled mutton, where they are entertained and receive gifts. Here the Gypsy smith and his wife are, at least for the occasion, affiliated with the Bulgarian community, sitting at the common table and sharing the offering food (R. Popov 1990).

These beliefs are founded on the dominant modes of thought in the conditions and context of this culture. Human thought in the conditions of Bulgarian traditional culture is strongly dependent upon and subject to the mechanisms of archaic thought through isomorphic binary oppositions (see Lévi-Strauss 1962). "The Gypsies," who are part of this opposition between the familiar and the strange on the ethnic level, appear from the point of view of their functioning and semantics equivalent to "others" with relation to the conception of life. In this way the "Gypsy" figures overlay the old archaic prototypes and adopt their functional and semantic load, first as representatives of the chthonic forces of the otherworld, of "chaos," as opposed to the "Bulgarians," who represent society, culturally regulated "space" (see Eliade 1987). This process of transmission of ethnocultural characteristics overlaid on the archaic prototypes is widespread in the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people in regard to other ethnic groups as well. For example the "Arab"

figures (*arapi*) appear in the *koukeri* customs (Arnaudov 1972:14-46). There are legends about "Jews" (*gidove*) and "Latins" (Iliev 1890). The figure of the antagonist in heroic epic poetry is presented as Tcher Arap (the Black Arab), Jalta Basirguiana (The Yellow Jew), or Filip Madjarin (Philip the Hungarian) (Ivanova 1988:20). In all cases the basic principle of comprehension of the "new" and the "strange" (in the present example, the Gypsies and their ethnocultural peculiarities) continues to be preserved in the situation of the "cold" culture through the underlying categories and models, inscribed in the general ethnocultural context.

The situation within the Gypsies' own ethnocultural system is completely different. One must be cautious about speaking of Gypsy society as a single and complete system. The Gypsies represent a complex ethnic formation, an ethnic conglomeration in which all the groups, connected through a hierarchical order or through kinship, are characterized by a certain number of ethnocultural features (Marushiakova 1990). Nevertheless it is possible to speak of a common type of Gypsy ethnocultural system distinguished through the cold culture-hot culture opposition. Despite diverse ethnocultural features, the different groups of Gypsies have functionally equivalent mechanisms and utilize principles of cultural adoption and transmission which are similar if not completely identical, representing ethnocultural grounds sufficient to allow us to classify it as a hot culture in general.

In this case, as with the Bulgarians, we are dealing with an analogy to the type based on the resemblance of the principles and mechanisms of function and transmission of this culture over time, which permits us to call it (conditionally, of course), a hot culture. This cultural type is characterized in general primarily by the creation of novelties, rather than the transmission of old cultural "texts," and by the rapid pace of cultural transformation and innovation (Lévi-Strauss 1983). Typical examples often given are the post-Renaissance European cultures and the entire range of modern cultures. It would be too extreme to speculate that the appearance and dissemination of new cultural texts is most important among the Gypsies, although this aspect does exist, especially in the general context of relations with the surrounding population, in this case, the Bulgarians. Typical examples in this regard are the Gypsy groups whom I discussed earlier, who are cultural "donors" to the Bulgarians. Of course the Gypsies (in general and within the framework of the different groups) also have their own elements of "traditionalism" like the cold cultures, for example with relation to crafts and activities which are typical of the entire group, with relation to social structure (preservation of the division into groups inherited from the ancient Indian caste system), with relation to taboos, and so forth (Marushiakova 1990). But more importantly, the Gypsies maintain their crafts and manufactures only insofar as there is a market for their products, certain economic niches which they fill. When such possibilities are lacking the Gypsies very rapidly adapt to the changed conditions by modifying or completely transform-

ing their traditional livelihoods to the new conditions. The musician Gypsies who nowadays occupy a high place in the life of the Bulgarians are a good example of the flexibility with which the Gypsies adapt their basic traditional activities. In certain cases the Gypsies even break with their old forms of livelihood. An example is migration into the towns or villages and participation in agriculture or other unusual activities, a process which began in the Ottoman Empire and today involves a large part of the Gypsy population in Bulgaria. In any case the Gypsies preserve several specific traits of their culture which in turn accords them a special place in the common cultural system.

But what allows us to define the ethnocultural peculiarities of the different Gypsy groups as a hot culture does not rest solely on this. The most important support for this characterization is found in the mechanisms of the Gypsies' rapid adaptation to the spiritual domain of the neighboring population and the corresponding transformation which the world view and spiritual life of the Gypsy groups undergoes. It has been widely known and remarked upon that, in comparison with other ethnic societies among which they live, the bedrock of this spiritual life, traditional religion and corresponding world view, is generally lacking among the Gypsies. The Gypsies rapidly replace one religion with another, if doing so improves their opportunities of occupying a higher position in the common sociocultural system and achieving a higher social status, sometimes guided by exceptionally mercenary reasons. Once adopted, the new religion can become a characteristic of the respective group, at least in the conditions of the Balkan peninsula. Moreover it should be emphasized that in distinction from the surrounding population, the religious world view has never played the same role among the Gypsies in the formation of the spiritual structure of life. Their spiritual life in fact represents a syncretic formation on a grand scale, which includes elements of different religions and cultures which would otherwise be in total opposition (for example, Christianity and Islam) and this is reflected correspondingly in the feasts, rituals and customs of the Gypsies. To tell the truth, we can hardly speak with certainty of particular, originally ethnospecific, feasts which the Gypsies would have brought from their old country and preserved. On the contrary they have widely adopted the feasts of the surrounding population, bringing them into their own system of feasts and rituals (with respective nuances among the different groups), which is notable for its complex character, formed of components of different ethnocultural origin, that is, specific as an integrated system.

The process of Gypsy adoption of the feasts, rituals and customs of the neighboring population produces interesting effects on the reciprocal contacts and influence of Gypsies and Bulgarians. The Gypsies adopt more elements or components of the ritual life of the neighboring Bulgarian population, such as rituals related to marriage, birth, funerals, Christmas, Vasiliovden (St. Basil's day),

Zagovezni (Sunday before Lent), Todorovden (St. Theodore's Day), St. Lazarus' Saturday, Easter, St. George's Day, St. Elias' Day, St. Mary's Day, etc. (Marushiakova 1980). It is interesting to note that some of these feasts are also celebrated by Muslim Gypsies. During the celebration of St. Elias, the Christian Gypsies as well as the Muslims go to Knijajevo to light a candle in the church and at the same time in the Islamic tomb of St. Bali-Efendi. In other cases there is even a collection of feast elements typical of disparate religious societies. The Christian St. George's Day and Muslim Herdelez are often celebrated together. Some of these feasts penetrate so deeply into the life of the Gypsies that they continue to celebrate them more assiduously than the surrounding population where these feasts are in decline; this is the case for St. Basil's Day and St. George's Day. Further, the migrations of the Gypsies into other countries may preserve the celebration of some feasts and in these countries certain feasts have begun to be considered as specifically Gypsy, for example St. George's Day in Sweden (Marta 1979).

In many other cases the Gypsies continue to preserve and maintain rituals and customs which, following contemporary sociocultural development, have been abandoned or forgotten by the Bulgarian population. When from the end of the 19th century to the present Bulgarian traditional culture underwent a new evaluation and often was completely abandoned or at least reduced by the Bulgarians themselves, these rituals and customs continued actively in the Gypsy milieu, despite modifications in form and content. A typical example is the *lazarouvane* folk custom of girls of marriageable age. It is performed it on St. Lazarus' Saturday, a week before Easter. Through this feast the girls receive permission to marry. The inclusion of the Gypsies in this ritual and finally their exclusive performance of it began at the end of the 19th century and reached its widest extent during the 1920s and 1930s. Information collected on the traditional culture of the Bulgarian people attests that, "nowadays this custom is kept only by Gypsy girls" (for a review of the literature see V. Popov 1985:268). In the Gypsy performance of this ritual its basic functions are considerably reduced and transformed. Nearly the entire cycle of ritual songs has disappeared, and those retained are abridged. The same processes occurred for the ritual dances. The ritual meal has disappeared. In practice nothing remains but the age composition of the participating girls, and the rounds they make of the houses, where, after singing, they receive gifts of food or, later, money. In the final analysis the ritual as performed by the young Gypsies has lost its ritual moments and functions and is practically reduced to begging for money and food, that is, it has been transformed into an addition means of livelihood.

The same process has taken place with regard to the custom of bringing rain, the *peperouda* 'butterfly' rituals. Performed by young girls, this custom was taken over by Gypsy girls (Arnaoudov 1972: 175, 185, 205, 207), and the songs and other ritual moments—the forecast of abundant harvest, the ritual meal, etc.—were

considerably diminished. The reduced ritual merely includes a round of the houses, the "butterfly" player (a young girl dressed in greenery), sprinkling householders with water, and the receipt of gifts, generally food and money. The same process of adoption by Gypsies of an similar custom for bringing rain called *dodola* occurs in the neighboring Balkan countries, particularly among the Serbs and Romanians (Arnaoudov 1972:186).

In recent times the same principle of development may be seen in the *koledouvan*e Christmas custom, especially in its juvenile variant. Today in a large number of villages this ritual is performed only by Gypsy boys, who no longer present the ritual songs and blessings, but reduce it solely to the reception of gifts, ordinarily nuts, candy, etc. Thus a group of traditional Bulgarian customs was transmitted onto the Gypsy field, where they were considerably diminished and the functions of the participants were reduced to the receipt of gifts, that is, a specific ritual form of the begging which is typical of many Gypsy groups.

A much different and particularly interesting case is the celebration of St. Athanasius' Day by the Gypsies of the town of Vidin. Even today they perform a ritual of the carnival-masquerade type, "the exit of the plague." The event includes a carnival-like parade in which "the plague," dressed as a "Turkish woman," who is at the head of the parade, is led out of town, where clothes are cast off. Participants are masked, a common meal is eaten, etc.² There are no rituals of the carnival type in the same region of Bulgaria, but certain indirect data suggest its earlier existence among Bulgarians. According to Tsani Gintchev, formerly, during a time of plague, thieves undressed, blackened themselves with soot, dressed up as "plague" monsters, and, mounted on horses, frightened the population and broke into houses (Arnaoudov 1972:17). According to Simeon Tabakov, in 1812, during the "great plague," most of the inhabitants of Sliven left the town, while some others who remained "became the plague" and dressed like *koukeri*, with bells and water buffalo horns (Tabakov 1911:477). In Bulgarian folk culture St. Athanasius' Day, 18 January, is tied directly to beliefs about the plague, which began on that day, and this is why ritual bread or honey rolls are made, which are eaten "to protect health;" elsewhere a black chicken is sacrificed (Gentchev 1985:108). According to the Gypsies who perform the ritual today, Bulgarians formerly participated and it was performed in the towns of Vratza, Vidin, Teteven, and Elena, but during the Bulgarian renaissance (the second half of the 19th century) the Bulgarians began to be ashamed and consequently paid the Gypsies to perform it (Khadgipetrov 1991).³

Given the facts stated and the traditional beliefs of the Bulgarians about the plague as "an old Gypsy woman," this interpretation appears entirely plausible. Further it is completely logical according to the mechanisms demonstrated of the reciprocal activities of the two different cultural types. A truly unique situation is

in force, the possibility of restoring an earlier traditional Bulgarian custom preserved by the Gypsies, that is, the exceptional paradox—a hot culture in the final account contributes to the preservation of the particular forms of a neighboring cold culture. This example shows once more the exceptional diversity of reciprocal cultural contacts and actions, including those among different types of ethnocultural systems, which can produce the most unexpected results.

The causes and mechanisms of generation of the widespread cult of Bibi 'aunt' at the end of the 19th century among the Gypsies of Yugoslavia might also be explained in this way (Pott 1845 II:4405-406; Petrović 1936-37; Uhlik and Beljakašič 1958). This hypothesis is also supported by the fact that in Bulgarian traditional culture the taboo name for plague is "aunt," and in some places in northeast Bulgaria St. Anthony's Day, 17 January, is celebrated as Plague Day or Aunt's Day. Ritual honey bread is made on that day. It is eaten for protection from "the aunt," the plague. Thus the two days represent a single whole connected with the plague and either one is celebrated in different regions (Gentchev 1985:108).

There is some indication that St. Athanasius' Day is meaningful for Gypsies in Bulgaria. In traditional Bulgarian beliefs that day is the middle of winter and people associate it with their expectations of weather change. There is a widespread belief that on that day St. Athanasius takes off his fur coat, puts on a silk shirt and goes to the mountains to call summer. In traditional beliefs St. Athanasius' Day is also the beginning of "Gypsy summer." The nomadic Gypsies get ready to travel and sacrifice a black chicken (compare this custom to the analogous element of the celebration of the plague by Bulgarians mentioned above). The sedentary Gypsy smiths celebrate St. Athanasius' Day as the day of their patron saint (R. Popov 1990).⁴ So that day is important in the lives of both nomadic and sedentary Gypsies. That in modern times similar beliefs and rituals are not recorded among the Gypsies themselves does not necessarily mean that they did not exist in the past.

Naturally there arises the question of why precisely St. Athanasius' Day and the beliefs and rituals connected with it were adopted and developed as a multi-functional holiday, celebrated as "plague day" at the beginning of the nomadic season for nomadic Gypsies and as a patron saint's day of the Gypsy smiths. Doubtless there is some plausibility in the hypothesis that Gypsies have a kind of ancient foundation of Indian beliefs and rituals, or at least remnants of them, which determines and facilitates the mutual overlaying and combination of these with Bulgarian beliefs and rituals. But this is still only speculative. New research is needed in order for such a hypothesis to be formulated and defended, that is, it is an issue for future study.

Notes

¹The term “Agoupovi kolibi” is mentioned in the 14th century “Rila monastery charter” issued by Tsar Ivan Shishman; some authors have tied this to the Gypsy group name “Agupti” (Kenrick and Puxon 1972:15).

²The first notice dates from 1911; it is set out in Arnaoudov (1972:208). See also Khadgipetrov 1991:6.

³The process of substitution of Gypsies for Bulgarians in the carnival-like customs in town surroundings has been recorded several times. For example in the 1940s the *koukeri* plays in the town of Karnobat were performed only by Gypsies (Kirilova 1991:64).

⁴The celebration by Bulgarians of St. Athanasius as a patron of the smiths is an old tradition (Kovatcheva-Kostadinova 1991:213-214).

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CHRONICLE

Sinclair Meets the Rom, 1902

Albert Thomas Sinclair
Edited by Sheila Salo

A. T. Sinclair (1844-1911) visited Rom households in Boston in 1902. His edited notes are presented with an introduction.

On the 4th of December, 1900, 122 Kalderaš Rom, having sailed from Liverpool, landed at St. John, New Brunswick, on the Beaver-Dempster Line steamer *Lake Superior*. The group included 55 who gave their birthplaces as Serbia in replying to the queries of the U.S. Immigration Service inspectors; 21 from Russia; 12 from Greece; and 8 from Hungary. One had been born at sea. Six claimed Brazil as their birthplace; these belonged to one of the families that had first arrived in the United States from South America in 1895 and since then had arranged for the immigration of several groups of Rom. (Birthplaces are not given for the remaining 11.) All had given Russia as the place of last residence to the shipping company officials. The birth dates of these immigrants, men, women, and children, ranged from 1830 to 1900. All the men gave their occupations as coppersmith. (RG85 CD). On December 5, most boarded the train for the US (*St. John Daily Sun*, 12/6/00).

By December 14 the group had been in Boston about a week and had begun to attract the attention of local newspapers, who referred to them as Hungarians, and immigration commissioners. First they gave the impression of being bound for the western states and "camped" at the railway station. Later they rented tenement rooms, reportedly living 25-30 persons per room, and were frequently evicted. The

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Boston Board of Health kept these apartments under surveillance. The Rom questioned a reporter about the availability of free land and farms; he recommended Manitoba. Sixteen of the men filed their declarations of intent to become naturalized US citizens (*Boston Globe* 12/14/00; *Boston Post* 12/18/00; the original declarations have not yet been found).

The *Globe* reported the Rom not lacking in money, the average sum per family the group showed upon immigration was \$323.33, and Sinclair's informant claimed \$1000 as the amount held by one family. Nonetheless Terrence Powderly, US Commissioner-General of Immigration believed that they were "without means." Both the newspapers and the immigration officials reported on alleged pilfering or begging by the Rom. The Commissioner-General was on the alert for incidents which would make the Rom public charges of a charitable institution or of the police, and thereby subject to deportation (RG 85: Import Book 66; Register; *Boston Evening Transcript* 12/14/00; *Boston Herald* 12/15/00; *Boston Globe* 12/18/00). The US Commissioner of Immigration at St. John was chastised for having admitted the group to the country (RG 85:C-G/St. John 12/16/00).

On December 22 at least part of the group left by train, reportedly toward Chicago (*Boston Evening Transcript* 12/21/00, *Boston Herald* 12/23/00).

It was not until the following March that A.T. Sinclair noted the arrival of these Rom, reporting what he had learned about them from David Klein, a Street Health Inspector. According to these notes the Rom numbered 75, in seven families, having \$10,000. "At their yearly gathering they decided to come to America as they had heard they could make lots of money. They went to St. Petersburg to Hamburg by railroad, thence to London, then to Halifax, where the agent cheated them, then to Boston. Klein and the Mayor sent 50 to Galveston (the Mayor knew the Austrian consul there and gave them a letter), and 25 to Richmond" (ATS: notebook 72, 3/13/01).

Further reports place some members of the shipboard group in Buffalo in mid-January 1901; near Johnstown, Pennsylvania in April 1901, and in northern Virginia and Washington, DC in the same month; some were in Philadelphia in December 1901 (*Buffalo Courier* 1/17/01, 1/18/01; RG 85: Import Book 66, C-G/ Buffalo 1/19/01; *Daily Tribune* 4/12-18/01, 6/7-8/01; *Evening Star* 4/27/01).

Sinclair met three families of this immigrant group, again in Boston, in April 1902; it is unclear whether he realized that those he met belonged to this group.

Albert Thomas Sinclair (1844-1911), a Boston attorney with interests in oriental rugs and tattooing as well as in Gypsies, sought information from "missionaries, consuls, foreign ministers, ambassadors, merchants, travellers, scholars, military officers, and Government officials." He was admired by his anonymous biographer (probably R. A. Scott MacFie) more for his industry in pursuing his interests than for "the...results of all his immense labours," noting his lack of source

criticism and analytical weakness (1911). Sinclair published only a few articles and notes in his lifetime; George F. Black took up the biographer's challenge to "save from his manuscripts whatever is valuable and give it logical form," publishing the edited materials in the *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*. Among these publications is that on American Romnichels edited from Sinclair's field notes (1917). The field notes on American Rom were not published, though Sinclair had mentioned his encounters with them in his 1908 article on "Oriental Gypsies." The accounts of the travels of the Rom through Russia, Siberia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, edited from Sinclair's notes, have been published in the *Newsletter of the Gypsy Lore Society* (S. Salo 1988).

The two contestants in the Boston brideprice case, and Sinclair's primary informants, were Sam Hill (ca. 1848-1926) and Harry Stone (born ca. 1845). Upon immigration Hill's papers did show him as a Russian national, as he indicated to Sinclair, while Stone, again as Sinclair's notes show, gave his birthplace as Budapest, Hungary.

After his meeting with Sinclair, Hill's travels took him to Thornton, Illinois (April 1903), Seattle, Washington (May 1903), and San Francisco (September 1903). In June 1917 he was among the Russian Rom who applied for papers in lieu of passports and subsequently traveled to Mexico (Salo 1992: 64). It was he who demanded treasure confiscated by the Mexican police and handed over to the US consul at Matamoros, and it was he who offered to inform on Rom returning, allegedly illegally, from Mexico (Salo 1992: 68-9).

The life of Harry Stone is less well known. In December 1901 he complained to the Russian consul in New York of harassment by Philadelphia police (RG261 16:1, 3:3). He too was among the Rom obtaining papers from the Russian consul in New York in June 1917.

Sinclair's rough pencil notes (ATS: notebook 68) are in diary form, followed by observations not apparently connected with a particular date. I have generally followed this structure. I have excluded the short vocabulary lists Sinclair collected from these Rom, and have abridged his discussions of "field work." I have given the Rom pseudonyms.

While the Rom accounts of their Russian travels form a unique testimony, the observations on their life in Boston and American travels for the most part confirm what is known from other sources. The notes cover the use of and interior arrangements within rental housing, clothing and ornament, and ways of making a living in the period shortly after immigration. The brief references to the Romnichels and Ludar indicate the complex ethnic landscape these Rom were learning to negotiate and emphasize the superficiality of their contacts with members of the other groups.

The greatest interest of the notes lies in their references to conflict and its resolution. Sinclair stumbles upon the Rom in the midst of a dispute over the return of a portion of the bride price following a couple's separation. Here the two *Xanamika*, the fathers of the separating husband and wife, sue one another in non-Gypsy civil court. Since bride price is unlikely to have been covered in Massachusetts law, the disputing parties would have had to have claimed wrongs which were so covered. We are not told, however, what grievances were claimed officially. Sinclair does not tell us whether, as has been usual, a parallel suit was being tried by the *kris*, the Rom adjudicatory court. It is interesting to note that the disputants did not bring criminal charges against one another to force a settlement, as later became common. Hill's charge that Stone wished to force his attentions upon his daughter-in-law has also become familiar; it is not clear whether Sinclair took this charge at face value. Any interpretation of the appeal to non-Gypsy courts as indicating the breakdown of the Rom judicial system under pressure from American culture will have to take this early example under consideration.

The notes refer to the appeal to consulates for the resolution of internal conflicts. Such an appeal would have been in addition to the other uses the Rom made of the consular services to which their passports entitled them—as nodes of communication and in difficulties with American agencies on various levels. American Rom in their travels abroad made similar use of the US consulates.

We must be thankful to Sinclair for recording as much as he did of the suit through which he met the Rom. He seems not to have seen the case as interesting. Indeed, he seems not to have been as interested in the lives of the Rom as in questioning them about "facts" and about events outside their immediate experience. He shows, for example, no curiosity about the Easter celebration, apparently content to know that the Rom were Eastern Orthodox. Sinclair, of course, was not trained in ethnography even as practiced in his day and did not have available systematic ethnographies of any Gypsy group. His complaints of the difficulties of learning "what I wish to know" suggest an expectation of understanding a culture on only brief acquaintance with its bearers.

While the notes refer to visits the Rom made to Sinclair's home, the diary records only those meetings at the homes of the Rom. We are left to guess what language Sinclair used in talking to the Rom—possibly Russian, several Russian words being rendered in Cyrillic in the notes.

The Notes

April 22, 1902. I saw Sam Hill in the court house. He had been arrested on mesne process by Harry Stone. Hill had been examined to take an oath that he was not about to leave the state and also the poor debtor's oath, but had been refused both.

Stone had sued him for 400 roubles [in another entry, \$200] which he claimed to have paid Hill for his daughter as a wife for his son. Hill then sued Stone. Hill said his daughter had had two children by Stone's son and liked him. She had come back to Hill because her husband's father had insisted she must live with him. She had declared that she would cut her throat first and had gone home to her father.

Hill spoke Russian, German, French, Hungarian, Rumanian. I tried him. Hill claimed he was a Russian and showed me his passport giving his residence as Kovno *gubernia* and *not* a gypsy. He said Stone was a Hungarian Gypsy and an Austrian subject and asserted that the Russian and Austrian consuls in New York would fix the matter. I went into the poor debtor court with him. He said the suit had been settled and he wanted the \$200 which had been deposited as bail paid to his daughter Sofia as it was hers. Hill had put up \$200 cash on bail on being refused the oath for poor debtors, and that he was not going to leave the state. He showed me his receipt for it. They settled up their suits. Hill paid Stone \$100 and took his daughter home.

Hill was living alone with his wife and two daughters. The rest of the Gypsies, a big crowd, he said, were together somewhere else. He was dressed well and seemed prosperous. He said he should stay here two or three months. We saw inspector Armstrong. Hill was about 50 years old, of medium height, erect, stout, had very black hair, black eye (he had only one eye) and a ruddy complexion. With him was another Gypsy man, age 35, thinner, pale, stooped; and a little boy about seven years old. All denied being Gypsies. They had been here in Boston several months ago and had been South. Hill said he had first come to Boston, then traveled to Washington, Chicago, Washington, New York, and Boston again. He had worked in a coal yard in Chicago, looking for work.¹ Hill could not read or write.

April 28, 1902. This afternoon I visited a Russian Gypsy family at 5 Fay St. They had one large room on the first floor. The father was Mark Grant, about 30 years old, born, he said, in Tiflis; his mother and father were also born in the country near there. He looked somewhat different from the other Gypsies, rather tall and resembled somewhat an Armenian. He had dark hair, eyes, and skin, was thin, stooping, pleasant, polite, with a smiling face. He spoke Georgian and Turkish well, but very little Armenian.

He married his wife in Kharkov, where he went to trade. She was a Russian Gypsy. She was about 22 or 23 years old and was a singer and dancer. He was a coppersmith. They did not speak German but did speak Russian well.

There was no furniture of any kind in the room, simply pillows and their baggage done up in gaudy large bags on which the wife was sitting and on which they wanted me to take a seat. A 22-days-old baby was lying on one pillow nearby. The wife was working at some needle work. She was a little woman, very gaily dressed, with gold coins in her long braids. Stone's son was there and a 16-year-old

boy born in Russia. The men all begged for cigarettes and money, and the woman for money to tell my fortune by the hand. All sang Gypsy songs in Russian and the men danced.

Thence I went to 28 Oneida St. and found Hill, his wife, another old woman and four or five young women 17 to 20 years old and several naked children. There was no furniture here of any kind. The dwelling consisted of two large rooms and a cooking stove near which the girls were making Hungarian cookies, cakes and sweet meals, as they called them, on a low table 18 inches high. The others were lying off on the cushions, pillows and baggage. Hill had on a silk bright particolored shirt with the sleeves rolled up, and looked half undressed. He was very anxious to put his daughter's husband in jail for not supporting her and angry at me because I would not undertake the suit for \$10 or at all. The old women were not dressed as well as the girls who were gaily got up, with gold coins in their long braided tresses.

Hill was so vehement and loud in his talk and manner about his wrongs, I left and went to 26 Wheeler St where I found the Stone crowd.

They had two large rooms on the first floor gaily fitted up with bright curtains and draperies which made the room look quite effective as a Gypsy bower, but no furniture. All were seated on the pillows, baggage, etc. There were some photographs of one woman's sister and her baby taken at Kaluga. All the younger women were rather slender and delicate looking, but well rounded, and evidently affected a spiritual appearance to impress. All were gaily dressed in bright colored silk chemises and skirts with gold coins in their braids. The men were dressed in gaudy silk shirts.

One man said he was born in Budapest and had married his wife in Russia, in Kaluga *gubernia* in the country. She was a Russian Gypsy and did not know any Hungarian. He and the old mother spoke Hungarian and were born in Hungary. They looked like Austrians and have an Austrian passport. All have dark hair eyes and beard, their skin is not very dark. His wife has a baby born here. Another man was medium height, pleasant, his wife also, like the other, was quite spirituelle, and affecting the quiet, ladylike gushing ways of Russian Gypsy songstresses and dancers. Soon Stone's son came in. He is the least attractive man there. He is a hard drinker, I think.

They put a baby in my arms so I could put some money in its hands. All wanted cigarettes, money, and presents, and the women wanted to tell my fortune.

The Hungarian Gypsies talked the best Gypsy. They understood me perfectly and I them. He said the Hungarian Gypsies spoke the purest Gypsy, that the Russians mixed more foreign words in it.

He and the Stones had gone to Russia because business was better there for them. They liked Russia much better than Austria and America better still.

The Hungarian man claimed he was not a Gypsy. They sang Gypsy songs and danced. They said their wives were singers and dancers. They appeared to be flourishing. I gave them all cigarettes. The Hungarians followed me to the outside door and invited me to have some beer out of a cask sitting there. They asked about the towns near Boston and their locations and where they could do some business.

Yesterday, today and tomorrow are *prazniki*, holidays.² They are all Orthodox. I gave them the car fare to come to my home and they promised to do so when they have time.

April 29, 1902. I saw the Stone party of Russian Gypsies at 26 Wheeler. They had just started out on the street from town but all went back with me.

They think I am a Rom, insist on it, say my father and mother must have been such, asked the color of their hair, eyes, etc. Say nobody other than Gypsies ever talks Gypsy at all and I pronounced everything exactly right and talk it all just right. So I must be a Gypsy. They ask how long I have been here, and evidently do not believe I was born in America.

Two men, one born in Hungary and the other in Russia, are exceedingly interested in our subject, asked why I wanted to know about Gypsies, etc. I told them I was writing a book on the subject, that it was interesting and was important for scholars, that there was no money in it. I spoke of Pischel, Kuhn, etc. They gave the closest attention and asked all about it again and again, understood my object, etc.

In their rooms was no baggage. I find simply feather beds and pillows and cushions covered with bright figured chintz, etc. Curtains are the same. The patterns show Gypsy scenes, dancing, singing, etc., all the cloth is made in Russia.

Hill now tells me Stone's son will not support his wife and children and wants me to have him arrested. Hill "yells like a Gypsy" all the time when I talk with him. He will talk about nothing but his troubles and berates me roundly for not helping him. From such a man as Hill very little can be obtained. He is rough, loud spoken, and selfish, looking out entirely for himself. There is nothing decent about him.

They had camped out here in West Roxbury and saw Gypsies there, but said they could speak hardly any Gypsy. They knew the Walkers. Cornelius Carter told me he had seen them.³

1 May 1902. This morning at 26 Wheeler St. I saw Lazo, 40 years old, who says he was born in Hungary and went to Russia with his father when he was eight to ten years old; Vosho, 34 years old, born in Russia; and Marina, Stone's wife, over 50 years old, who was sewing shirts. I also saw the family at 5 Fay Street.

Lazo and Vosho both particularly questioned me as to whether I was a Rom. "We have been honest with you. We are Rom."

I told them no. Then they asked, "Was your father or mother Rom?" I answered, "No."

"Then your grandfather or grandmother?" No.

"Then your ancestors way back?" No.

"Why are you so much interested in Gypsies?"

They thanked me, and said they would help me all they can and would tell me the truth. I think now they do.

They have their [coppersmithing] tools here at a blacksmith shop.

Their wives tell fortunes through interpreters, their 12-year-old boys. Two colored women 35 or 40 years old and several other middle aged women came in to have their fortunes told.

It is striking how quickly their children pick up English.

One most important means of investigating Gypsies is from the Gypsies themselves. They are keen observers, know their race, how to get at the facts, what to inquire about.

They had been in Omaha and Cleveland. They had both seen Moldavian Gypsies in Cleveland, Ohio, with bears. These Gypsies had long hair.⁴ They say American Gypsies⁵ can speak little Gypsy, they only say Romanichal, a word the Rom have never heard except here, it is not a Russian Gypsy word. I asked particularly. They tell me the American Gypsies cannot talk Gypsy, but only know Romanichel (a word not used by themselves) and yet they give me other words the American Gypsies use, such as *grai*.

How little people, even those who are much interested, learn about the American Gypsies! They do not know they own real estate, lend money, join the churches, how many or how few there are, etc. In fact they know little about them.

The woman and children and two young men also kept bothering me for money, cigarettes, my map, etc., so I could not quite give them my undivided attention. That is one of the great difficulties in learning from such people, except in my house or office with only one or two there. They will not stick to the point but interrupt with questions, begging, laughter, nudge your elbow, etc.

Again at my house they seemed constrained and ill at ease. It was hard to talk with them. They were uneasy and got away soon. In their houses, with lots of them about, I laugh, joke, amuse and interest them, just as they do me. They sing, dance. I tell them about America, joke and all are highly interested and enjoy it immensely for an hour or so. Then they get tired. They look and act so. Some may go out. They yawn, stretch themselves. Then I leave and go to another party of them. I find several ways excellent for information: 1) all together; 2) the men alone; 3) the children alone; 4) the old women and several of the children alone. Sometimes I ask many

questions; again they get to talking and give me facts I never suspected; then they rattle away something of no importance when I turn the conversation.

It is very difficult to obtain facts from them about anything, particularly what I wish to know. When I ask questions they often avoid answers by a digression, etc. They are masters at the arts of dissimulation and concealment. The fact that I want to know anything makes them suspicious unless the subject is clearly such that a direct answer can do them no harm.

None of them are willing to tell their names and relationships. I can get them by sticking to it but they turn the conversation to something else, laugh, say what do you want my name for, and very cunningly so far have practically avoided it.

In answer to my express question about it one of the men said they spoke Gypsy as well as they did Russian. But his manner and talk showed he did not quite mean that. He means they talk Gypsy right along fast but can not, so to speak, talk everything in Gypsy. Russian is their mother tongue now. They speak it among themselves as such and only at times speak Gypsy. The old lady stated distinctly they spoke Russian better than Gypsy. They talked generally in Russian, but they also talked easily in Gypsy.

I am satisfied most of the men and the old lady talk Gypsy very well without much mixture of any kind. The pronunciation and phonetics are somewhat different from Hungarian Gypsy. The old woman and one of the men say that Hungarian Gypsy is purer and better.

What surprised me was the purity of their Gypsy. It was so much better and the words more like my Gypsy than Patkanov and other Russian book-Gypsy both as to phonetics and real Gypsy words.

June 1902. Three separate parties of Russian Gypsies stopped 10 or 15 minutes each on Union Square 300 feet from my house this month. They camped out one night on Sergeant Burnes' land. They had wintered in Canada. They went to Lawrence to work in the mills.⁶ They were looking for the other Russian Gypsies I had met. This shows how hard it is for me or anybody to find what we are anxious to.

Notes

Acknowledgments. Sinclair's notes are part of the A.T. Sinclair Collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations, and are published by permission of the New York Public Library.

¹It is likely that the Rom camped in or near the coal yard and there performed the coppersmithing work solicited elsewhere in the city.

²Easter, according to the Julian calendar used by the Russian Orthodox Church, fell on 27 April in 1902.

³Sinclair here refers to local Romnichels (Sinclair 1917; M. Salo and S. Salo 1982).

⁴Most likely Ludar (see M. Salo 1979 for a discussion of the three Gypsy groups mentioned in Sinclair's notes).

⁵Romnichels, or "English Gypsies."

⁶Probably to do coppersmithing work for the mills.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Az erdő anyja. Cigány mesék, hagyományok. *Károly Bari.* Budapest: Gondolat, 1990. 466 pp. 228 Ft. (cloth). ISBN-963-282-345-1.

Le věšeski děj. Az erdő anyja című kötet eredeti, cigány nyelvű szövegei. *Károly Bari.* Budapest: Országos Közművelődési Központ, 1990. 506 pp. 180 Ft. (cloth).

Katalin Kovalcsik

Károly Bari, long recognized as a fine poet by his Hungarian readership, has published his second collection of folklore, *The Mother of the Forest: Gypsy Tales and Traditions*. While his previous book, *The Fire Red Snake* (Bari 1985a) presented examples of Vlach Gypsy folk poetry, the present book provides the reader with a selection from his own huge collection of texts, mostly prose. The volume titled *Le Věšeski Děj: The Original Gypsy Texts of The Mother of the Forest* was published at the same time as the Hungarian version. Along with the original Gypsy texts are the translations into English of two interviews with the author, as well as a translation of the table of contents for the foreign reader.

In an attempt to find a definition for these two books, one could say that they form a prophet's immense work. This definition, however, requires qualification. Károly Bari taught himself everything one can learn in an autodidactic manner in Hungary. Bari mastered several dialects of his ancestors' mother tongue, and taught himself the ethnography of Gypsies in Hungary, as well as that of Hungarians. In the meantime Bari recorded and made notes on every piece of information on folklore that he encountered, because he knew "that this collection could serve as a part of the foundation for the future development and cultural self-construction of the Gypsy people." (English text p.17). This book, therefore, is not only a publication of folklore, but through the recreation of Gypsy mythology it also points towards the development of a cultural self-construction.

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This Gypsy mythology is outlined in the introduction of the Hungarian language volume: "In Gypsy mythology, the main god's role is played by Del. He is the creator and the director of the universe, the god of fertility, the protector of the family and the generator of good fate (*pácima, etrej*). His wife, Queen of the Goodhearted Sky (*Csérexki Thagarnyi*) protects orphans and supports the sick, according to the faith of Gypsies in Transylvania. They have only one child, Édusi, who has all the supernatural power of his father, which corresponds to the status of 'son of god'. The Mother of Earth is called Carina" (p.19). In what follows the poet describes the family of the main god, including the "harmful demons" and "the characters possessing the ability to evoke the forces of the other world." The author constructs this mythology based on motifs found in Gypsy tales, a work similar to that of the first Hungarian writer on Gypsy mythology, Wlislöcki, a hundred years earlier (Wlislöcki 1893: XVI-XX). Because Bari is constructing a mythology, he does not feel obliged to utilize the data available in Hungarian literature on Gypsies. For example, many Gypsies hold that God's wife was the Virgin Mary, and that while they might have had a lot of children, Jesus Christ was not necessarily one of them (see e.g. most recently Réger and Gleason 1991, text 8).

The material in the present collection serves to illustrate the concept described above. The titles of the chapters suggest that the 115 pieces cover a large area of Gypsy oral history: tales, legends of origin, belief stories; wedding and christening customs and beliefs; funeral customs, stories about the deceased; festive customs, songs of festivity; magic, predictions and dream readings; prayers and miracle stories; children's folklore; and ballads and epic songs. The material was collected from Vlach Gypsy performers in Hungary and Transylvania. In addition there are twelve Hungarian Gypsy texts told in Hungarian. Versions of the majority of these texts have not been published previously. This is especially true for the Transylvanian tales and the epic songs. As far as the translations are concerned, the author admits that he "did not intend to translate the texts literally, but rather to identify with the real meaning." He wanted "to have a unity of style preserving at the same time the different characteristics of the story-tellers as well as their performance" (p. 22). These differences can hardly be noticed by the non-expert reader, since the texts, due to their mythic content, are transcribed into a literary style difficult to digest even for the well-read Hungarian reader. The poet creates a new epic style by adding explanations to the otherwise simple stories. This new style has little to do with the "unusual linguistic density and lack of ornamentation" (p. 10) as Gypsy epic style is described by the author.

The Gypsy language volume was seemingly written for the international expert readership. (The book does not mention whether it also intends to serve in the creation of a written Gypsy literature.) In this volume the author abandons the Hungarian-based orthographic transcription used in his previous book (Bari 1985b),

and bases the spelling primarily on international traditions of transcription. The problems resulting from his new spelling system can be best observed in the Transylvanian Kalderash texts, in which a certain command of the Romanian language would be helpful. The effect of Romanian words in the Gypsy text is somewhat incoherent, because each of them is transcribed following a different pattern. To give an example, the Romanian word for "emperor" was borrowed by the Gypsies and was given a Gypsy ending, which gave *impërato*. This is transcribed by the author as *omporato*. *Sin* 'there is' becomes *shin*, etc. It is also somewhat confusing to see the phonetic sign *x* so often, since in Kalderash the verb endings modified from *s* to *h* are so softly pronounced that they can seldom be heard, and Bari describes them as uvular fricatives (eg. *phenex* instead of *pheneh* 'you say'). Unfortunately, the translation into English of the interviews and the use of the international transcription system are not really of much aid to the non-Hungarian reader, as the main body of texts are not similarly translated into any language besides Hungarian.

The reader who does not speak Hungarian will probably not understand the texts due to the high number of Hungarian loan words. (On the other hand, the number of Romanian loan words is suspiciously low.) In spite of this, Bari's rich collection can be a treasury for foreign researchers of Gypsy folklore. Unfortunately, even though the transcription system used is relatively simple, it will prevent Gypsy readers in Hungary from understanding and enjoying the book.

On the basis of the above, a final judgement could be summed up thus. With an immense intellectual investment a Hungarian book has been written, the style of which corresponds to the demands of the most educated intellectuals and the content of which would be satisfying for the average person thinking in 19th century terms of self-identity. It is also a Gypsy book that does not correspond to the requirements of international publications, but which also cuts itself off from access to the Hungarian Gypsy readership. Bari does not, however, take such opinions into account, because of his experience of prejudice in the hostile environment in which he lives. Bari is also under pressure to conform to outdated notions of national identity, according to which a people can only become a "nation" if it has a "national culture," that is an artificially created common cultural system and mythology based on its own folklore preserved in the mother tongue. This is why Bari fights, like some mythological hero, for the creation and acceptance of a Gypsy national culture. He cannot therefore take into consideration opinions, data and, most painfully of all, the demands of Gypsies to read in their own language, since these would deter him from the achievement of his goal.

Whether or not Bari's books will someday serve as a basis for just such a romantic creation, as in the case of the mythologies of other European peoples', they

will definitely provide a source of work for philologists, historians and ethnographers.

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Ethnic Awareness and the School: An Ethnographic Study. *Mary E. Anderreck.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1992. Sage Series on Race and Ethnic Relations, vol. 5. 156 pp. \$39.95 (cloth) ISBN 0-8039-3886-1; \$19.95 (paper). ISBN 0-8039-3887-X.

John Kearney

This is a book about boundaries. To what degree do people set up boundaries between "us" and "them"? How are boundaries learned by the developing individual? At what point in development are they firmly established? How persistent are they in the continuing existence of a group? The author attempted to find answers to these questions during a year's work in a Catholic school as a participant observer and researcher of an accommodating group, Mississippi Irish Travelers.

All people establish boundaries between "us" and "them." Some types of boundaries are language, dress, surnames, and rules of behavior toward others, in terms of who are acceptable colleagues in work or recreation and who are appropriate marriage partners. When a new group enters a cultural area it may *assimilate*, by which it eliminates all important boundaries and completely integrates with the dominant group. The new group may *acculturate*, by which is meant

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that it takes on many of the values and norms of the dominant group in the process of becoming assimilated. A third strategy is *accommodation*, by which the new group adopts those behaviors that enable it to coexist with the dominant group but retains those values and norms which permit the group to preserve its own distinctive identity.

Traveling people have existed in Ireland at least since the 17th century. They are and have been a pariah group of itinerants. They have frequently been called "tinkers," possibly because throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries they earned a good part of their sustenance by mending pots and pans. They have always bought, sold, and traded draft animals (horses, asses, oxen, and mules) and have always been known as shrewd bargainers. They have their own language, Shelta, which, though derived from Gaelic, has a substantially different vocabulary and is incomprehensible to the average Irish speaker. It is said that approximately ten percent of its vocabulary is derived from Romany. According to Andereck, the Mississippi Travelers retain some Shelta, but younger persons are familiar with only a few phrases.

During the potato famine in Ireland from 1845 to 1850 some Travelers emigrated to the United States and to other parts of the English speaking world. Their culture has persisted in parts of the southern United States, and today, according to Andereck, there are three groups, the Georgia Travelers, the Texas Travelers, and the Mississippi Travelers. These American Travelers continue to be itinerant, now traveling in trucks and trailers with their entire families, especially during the summer. They make their living by spray painting, laying linoleum, and asphaltting. While the children are registered in school to comply with compulsory attendance laws, they often enter classes late, in October rather than September, and sometimes as late as November.

Distinctions in dress and marriage customs are part of their culture. Traveler girls tend to dress in an ornate style and to wear clothing decorated with gold and sequins on ceremonial occasions. Boys also dress distinctly and often wear religious medals prominently outside their clothing.

Travelers marry endogamously and quite young. Boys are usually over 21, but girls may be as young as twelve at the time of marriage (p. 28). As early as the third grade Traveler girls learned of expected segregation and of the fear of marriage outside the group (p. 109). A Traveler boy will not marry a girl with more education than he, so a desire for education beyond the seventh grade would be detrimental to the girl's future (p. 113).

While doing her research, Andereck taught social studies in the junior high grades of a Catholic school in a large city in the southern United States. Within the school's attendance area was a large trailer park, half of which was reserved for trailers occupied by Irish Travelers. Traveler children constituted 12.4 percent of

the student body of this school in kindergarten through eighth grade, a total of 54 students. Through participation with faculty and students, in-depth interviews, and the use of sociometric tests, Andereck sought to find out how children and teachers developed a consciousness of boundaries between Travelers and non-Travelers, or "country people," as the Travelers called them.

It was found that kindergartners had little idea of distinctions between Travelers and country people, although on sociometric evaluations the Traveler children tended to choose Traveler children whom they knew better over non-Travelers as companions in either work or play situations. The mothers of the Traveler kindergarten children appeared most solicitous of their progress and were anxious to provide tutoring for them to assure that they would keep up with their peers. The author's research indicated that Traveler and non-Traveler children and teachers all became progressively more conscious of distinctions between Travelers and non-Travelers as the study progressed through the upper grade levels.

According to Andereck, the local church has exerted a strong influence in efforts to encourage assimilation of the Georgia Travelers (p. 114). Mississippi Travelers are aware of this and as a result are resistant to interventions in the conduct of their lives. They will resist assimilation but do comply with compulsory school attendance laws in an effort to accommodate while retaining their cultural identity.

This book is a valuable introduction to a little studied group. It raises many questions which may apply to theories of accommodation and acculturation. It is easy to understand the persistence of groups such as the Amish or the Hutterites that have distinctive linguistic and liturgical practices to buttress their identity, but the Irish Travelers share a common religion with millions of Americans and share a common language with the dominant groups in the United States, preserving very little Shelta. It is not easy to understand why the Irish Traveler culture has persisted for so long. During the famine years in Ireland the major ports of entry to the United States were Boston and New York. The fact that this culture has apparently been preserved only in the southern regions of the country makes one wonder whether there may be aspects of the host culture that were particularly hospitable to the continuance of the culture. This is not a question that Andereck touches, but it may be a pertinent question for further researchers or theorists. We are grateful to her for this introduction.

Information for Contributors

The *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* welcomes articles in all scholarly disciplines dealing with any aspect of the cultures of groups traditionally known as Gypsies as well as those of other traveler or peripatetic groups. Reviews of books and audiovisual materials, and notes, are also published. The groups covered include, for instance, those referring to themselves as Ludar, Rom, Roma, Romanichels, Romnichels, Sinti, Travelers, or Travellers. Fields covered include anthropology, art, folklore, history, linguistics, literature, political science, sociology, and their various branches. The views expressed in the *Journal* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

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- Piasere, Leonardo. 1987. In Search of New Niches: The Productive Organization of the Peripatetic Xoraxané in Italy. *In The Other Nomads*. Aparna Rao, ed. Pp. 111-132. Köln: Böhlau.
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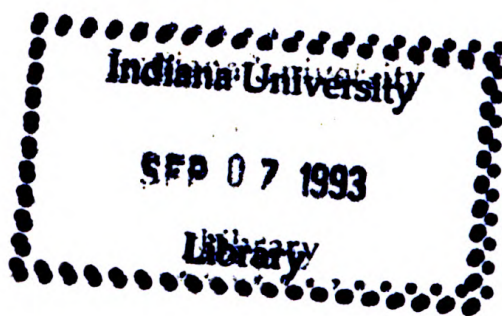
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Sheila Salo, *Editor*

Editorial board

Victor A. Friedman, Matt T. Salo, Carol Silverman, Anita Volland

Contents

Persecution and Annihilation of Roma and Sinti in Austria, 1938-1945	
<i>Elisabeth Klamper</i>	55
More on the Sibilants of Romani	
<i>Eric P. Hamp</i>	67
The Effects of State Assimilation Policy on Polish Gypsies	
<i>Andrzej Mirga</i>	69
Commentary	
Rom Migrations and the End of Slavery: A Rejoinder to Fraser	
<i>T. A. Acton</i>	77
Book Reviews	
The Gypsies (Angus Fraser)	
<i>Leonardo Piasere</i>	91
Neue deutsche Zigeunerbibliographie (Joachim S. Hohmann)	
<i>Angus Fraser</i>	97
Index to volume 3	101
Information for contributors	103

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Persecution and Annihilation of Roma and Sinti in Austria, 1938-1945

Elisabeth Klamper

Primary documentary sources are analyzed to trace the antecedents to and development of Nazi measures taken to control and finally to eliminate Gypsy populations of Austria between 1938 and 1945.

On March 13th, 1938, the day of Austria's *Anschluß*, or incorporation into the "Third Reich," about 12,000 Roma and Sinti were Austrian citizens. Approximately 8,000 Roma were living in the Burgenland, formerly a part of western Hungary which had been ceded to Austria only in 1920. The evidence for the existence of Roma in this region dates back to the 15th century. In the era of Empress Maria Theresa, the Burgenland Roma had been forced to settle and made a bare living as day laborers, tinkers, coppersmiths, musicians, and horse dealers. In the 19th century another group of Roma, the Lovara, had migrated to Austria from Slovakia and Hungary. Most of them were horse dealers who remained nomadic and did not settle down until the *Anschluß*. In addition to the Roma there were about 3,000 Sinti living in western Austria and Vienna. The latter lived in houses during the winter and traveled during the summer. Both the settled and itinerant Roma and Sinti were regarded—at least *de jure*—as citizens of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy who had to pay taxes, send their children to school and serve in the army. Nevertheless they faced popular prejudices; for example, they were accused of stealing children and of poisoning wells.

In the period after World War I the situation of the Sinti and Roma, especially that of the Burgenland Roma, grew worse. Up to the period following World War II, Burgenland was the poorest and most backward province of Austria. This

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agricultural region consisted of large landed properties and therefore had a large population of agricultural laborers and day laborers without their own lands. The Roma were part of the lowest social stratum of the population. Rarely were they permitted to live in the villages, but had to make a bare living on the village fringes. The extremely high unemployment of the interwar period made it almost impossible for them to earn a living in their traditional professions as coppersmiths, tinkers, and musicians, as well as in other professions. A great number of Burgenland Roma, like many other Austrians, were thrown upon poor relief, and cases of pilferage occurred, primarily thefts of poultry and fruit.

In the 1930s prejudices which had been handed down for centuries, for example that Roma lived from theft and deceit, were given a racist component. Based upon the pseudoscientific findings of late 19th-century racial theory Roma and Sinti were discriminated against as being racially inferior, genetically tainted, and therefore born to be criminals. In the February 1934 issue of *Gendarmerie-Rundschau*, a police newspaper, Police Captain (*Gendarmeriestabsrittmeister*) Otto Stöger described the Burgenland Roma as “extremely dirty, ragged, shabby characters...seriously hereditarily tainted,” simply “the criminal born to be malicious.”¹ Stöger’s report not only displays racial prejudice but also the prejudices concerning the “social behavior” of Roma and Sinti which were used by the Nazis. “Only the smallest proportion of the Burgenland Gypsies live by honest work. All the others live by begging and primarily by stealing.”²

Even before the *Anschluß* Roma and Sinti were looked upon as lazy, work shy and unproductive. This question of productivity played an important role in eugenic thinking. They were also considered a social burden to be discarded. The latter opinion is distinctly reflected in the terminology commonly used in connection with Sinti and Roma, where they are referred to as a public nuisance or “Gypsy Plague.”³

Between 1933 and 1938 an increasing number of Roma and even more Sinti migrated to Austria to escape the beginnings of persecution in Germany. The first Gypsy Camp (*Zigeunerlager*) was established in Berlin in 1936. In many letters to the General Security Administration (*Generaldirektion für die öffentliche Sicherheit*) in Vienna, the Security Administrations (*Sicherheitsdirektionen*) of the federal provinces complained about an “increasing appearance of Gypsies” and drew the conclusion that this was linked with “the extremely harsh measures against Gypsies in Germany.”⁴ It is noteworthy that the repressive measures in Nazi Germany created a “Gypsy Problem” in Salzburg. Salzburg had been a transit area for Roma and Sinti and there were few problems between the nomads and the local population until the beginning of the 1930s. Frictions increased from 1937 on.

German Sinti fleeing the beginning repression migrated especially to the Tyrol; the authorities did not permit them to remain there but sent them off to

neighboring Salzburg. The Salzburg authorities more or less secretly sent them back to the Tyrol or on to Styria.⁵

Prejudice and discrimination against Roma and Sinti based on intolerance, ignorance, and racial arrogance had been omnipresent in Austria long before the *Anschluß*; they were then taken up and developed by the National Socialist dictators. The idea that Roma and Sinti, like other social outcasts, being a “foreign body” and social burden, had to disappear, had made its way within a broad stratum of the population long before these threats were carried out. This may at least in part explain the willingness of many “Fellow Germans” (*Volksgenossen*) to accept or even approve the forced labor camps and the deportation of Roma and Sinti without protest. Immediately after the *Anschluß* National Socialist measures of discrimination against Roma and Sinti were implemented.

Before elaborating, let me say a few words about terminology and source material. In the following discussion I preserve the term “Gypsy” as used in the original records. The terminology “Sinti and Roma” is currently preferred by German-language writers, “Gypsy” being nowadays regarded, with good reason, as pejorative.

The source material pertaining to the persecution of Gypsies is rather fragmentary. All matters dealing with Gypsies in Austria or the later Ostmark were directed by the *Kriminalpolizeileitstelle* in Vienna. In the Reich the Central Office of Detective Forces (*Reichskriminalpolizeiamt*) (RKPA) which was part of the Central Office for Reich Security (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*) (RSHA) led by Reinhard Heydrich dealt with the “Gypsy question.” The head of the RKPA was Arthur Nebe. All RKPA documents concerning Gypsies were destroyed either in bomb raids or by order of those responsible. In addition all documents of the Vienna *Kriminalpolizeileitstelle* are missing. Only the collection of decrees (number 15) at the Bundesarchiv Koblenz concerning “preemptive combat against crime” and a number of documents in various Austrian provincial archives which have been systematically collected by the Documentation Archive of the Austrian Resistance (Dokumentationsarchiv des Österreichischen Widerstandes, DÖW) have been preserved. The DÖW also has interviews with surviving Roma and Sinti as well as the Lackenbach camp diary which was found in the Vienna Landesgericht.

The Austrian Roma and Sinti were forbidden to take part in the plebiscite of April 10, 1938.⁶ In May 1938 the Nuremberg Laws came into effect in Austria; contemporary commentaries interpreting those laws unanimously asserted that Gypsies were of “alien blood.”⁷ Following those laws intermarriage between Gypsies and persons of “German or related blood” was prohibited.⁸ Contrary to the opinion of some historians⁹ Roma and Sinti were in no way regarded as “Aryans” by the Nazi rulers. In the Lackenbach camp those arrested “in error” were released if they could prove their “Aryan descent.”¹⁰ Dr. Robert Ritter, since November

1936 director of the Racial Hygiene and Genetic Biology Research Unit of the Reich Department of Health (*Rassenhygienische und erbbiologische Forschungsstelle des Reichsgesundheitsamtes*) conducted extensive “genetic biological” (*erbbiologische*) examinations. In 1939 and 1940 he examined 11,000 Austrian Roma and Sinti; the “research results” are preserved in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz. His findings, however, had no influence on the “racial evaluation” and ultimate fate of Roma and Sinti. They remained considered aliens and anti-social, and therefore, in the view of racial anthropology, genetically inferior. They thus had to be expelled from the *deutsche Volksgemeinschaft*. However, in the days of Austria’s *Anschluß* it was not quite clear how this was to be accomplished. At that time the “solution to the Gypsy problem” was not a priority as there were 200,000 Jews who had to be robbed of their belongings and forced to emigrate.

The persecution and annihilation of the Austrian Gypsies was not based on a systematically organized plan carried out step by step. A number of initiatives, measures, and decisions issued and carried out by lower levels of the administration such as *Landräte*, heads of *Kriminalpolizeileitstellen*, mayors, and so forth contributed—in the sense of Hans Mommsen’s theory of “cumulative radicalization” of the Nazi system—to the development of anti-Gypsy policy. In this context we must refer to Tobias Portschy, the illegal *Gauleiter* of Burgenland before 1938 and his pamphlet, *The Gypsy Question: Memorandum by the Landeshauptmann of Burgenland*, published in August 1938. In this memorandum Portschy, who later became Deputy *Gauleiter* of Styria and jointly responsible for the deportation of Slovenes from Untersteiermark (today Slovenia),¹¹ pleaded for forced labor and sterilization of Gypsies because “the Gypsies, as it has been proved, are hereditarily tainted and a people of habitual criminals, parasites causing enormous damage to our people’s body (*Volkskörper*).”¹² Further instructions by Portschy prohibited the public appearance of Gypsy musicians¹³ and school attendance by Gypsy children by September 1938. In Vienna these measures were taken as late as Autumn 1939 in accordance with a decree by the *Reichsministerium für Erziehung Wissenschaft und Volksbildung*. Likewise in the autumn of 1938 Portschy issued a decree stating that “all Gypsies able to work are to be recruited for work at public construction sites, roads, and quarries.”¹⁴ Portschy figured as a trailblazer, and his measures were regarded as examples for the Ostmark.¹⁵ A number of Austrian Gypsies were arrested in the summer of 1938 in a large scale raid in the “preemptive combat against crime.” On the pretext of searching for “work shy, antisocial elements” men were arrested and taken to the Dachau concentration camp.¹⁶

On September 8, 1939, the Reichsführer SS and Chief of the German police Heinrich Himmler issued a circular concerning “Fighting the Gypsy Plague” and ordering the registration of all settled and non-settled Gypsies.¹⁷ In complying with this order the Austrian police could refer to a *Zigeunerevidenz*, a card index of more

than 8000 names which had existed since earlier in the 1930s.¹⁸ Based on a decree issued by the RKPA to the Vienna Kriminalpolizeileitstelle on June 5, 1939 concerning the "battle against the Gypsy Plague in Burgenland," the arrest of 2,000 men and 1,000 women was ordered. The men were taken to Dachau and later to Buchenwald and Mauthausen; the women were taken to Ravensbrück.¹⁹ In her book *Die Frauen von Ravensbrück*, Erika Buchmann remembers this transport.

One morning there they were, sitting there...utterly bewildered by fear, by expulsion from their usual neighborhood, by forcible separation of the families.... The little Gypsy girls clung to the skirts of their mothers and started to cry whenever an SS man was to be seen. For two days and one night the SS left the prisoners sitting on the ground in front of the bath, mocked by the female guards and the SS, spit at, beaten, kicked, exposed to the burning sun in the day and the cold at night until they were registered, bathed and clothed, and sent to a block at last.²⁰

In 1939 voices urging that "the Gypsy nuisance should be dealt with energetically" increased. Referring to Portschy's memorandum, Salzburg police demanded the sterilization and the transport of Gypsies to forced labor camps.²¹ Local tabloids published an increasing number of inflammatory articles with similar demands.²²

By a decree of October 17, 1938 (*Festsetzungserlaß*) the Central Office for Reich Security ordered that until further notice Gypsies were not allowed to leave their usual place of residence and further that the Kriminalpolizeileitstellen were to create assembly camps for Gypsies.²³ These measures resulted in the transformation of traditional Gypsy camps situated on the outskirts of towns and villages into "assembly camps." Thus the first step toward deportation, the concentration of Gypsies in one place, was taken. The *Festsetzungserlaß* was the result of a conference convened by Heydrich on September 9, 1939 where, among other things, the decision was made to deport Gypsies from the Reich to Poland.²⁴ As late as early October 1939 Hitler had planned to leave Poland as a kind of *Reststaat* (remainder state)²⁵ and to "settle" there the Poles and Jews driven out of Wartheland Gau as well as the Gypsies from the Reich. Since September 1939 similar plans had been pursued by Adolf Eichmann then dealing with the creation of the *Zentralstelle für jüdische Auswanderung* in Prague, following the Vienna example. Eichmann had the vague notion of creating a Jewish reservation in the region of Nisko on the San river.²⁶ In September and October 1939 he was ordered by Heydrich to deport Jews from Vienna and Mährisch-Ostrau in Moravia to this area. On October 10, 1939 Arthur Nebe, head of the RKPA and responsible for the "solution of the Gypsy problem," asked Eichmann "when to send the Berlin Gypsies." After some problems of communication Eichmann informed Nebe that the first transport of Jews would leave Vienna on October 20, 1939, and that 3 or 4 railway cars of Gypsies could be attached to this train.²⁷ However Eichmann's Nisko plans were soon rejected. Indeed he deported 2,584 Jews from Vienna and Mährisch-Ostrau

but no Gypsies at all. It is interesting to note that even before the *Festsetzungserlaß* Nebe had tried to find destinations for future deportations of Gypsies and that there was cooperation between Nebe and Eichmann on this subject. Obviously the solution to the "Gypsy question" lay through deportation to Poland. However there were dissenting voices, such as the Reichsärzteführer Leonardo Conti, who pleaded for the sterilization of Gypsies.²⁸ In the meantime Hans Frank had been appointed Governor General of the Occupied Polish Areas on October 12, 1939. Frank resisted the plans of the Reichsführer SS to deport about three million people to the General Government from November 15, 1939 to the end of February 1940 since there was virtually no functioning administration in the General Government. Apart from the deportation of 2,500 Gypsies from western and northern Germany in May 1940 no Roma and Sinti were deported to the General Government.²⁹

In Austria the *Festsetzungserlaß* had considerable impact. Local authorities obviously assumed that the "Gypsy question" would soon be resolved by deportation to Poland. On April 15th the SD-Leitabschnitt Wien/Niederdonau announced:

Some weeks ago we were informed by the Gaugrenzlandamt that the evacuation of the Burgenland Gypsies to Poland is at hand. Therefore all remaining Gypsies from Niederdonau and Vienna are to be transferred to the Burgenland so that they can be covered by this joint measure.³⁰

Because the evidence is missing, we do not know whether Gypsies from Vienna and Lower Austria really were transferred to the Burgenland in 1940. In fact many communities—especially in western Austria—were not willing to tolerate the Gypsies in their municipal areas for long since these Gypsies could no longer pursue their traditional trades and had to be provided for by the communities. In 1940 mayors and Landräte bombarded the head of the Salzburg Kriminalpolizeileitstelle, Anton Böhmer, and the Gauleiter of Salzburg with angry protests. They complained about high costs and demanded the removal of Gypsies from the communities, conjuring up common prejudices such as "sexual dissoluteness".³¹ In February 1940 the Salzburg Kriminalpolizeileitstelle, especially Dr. Böhmer, went into action. On Böhmer's initiative, and due to the pressure exerted by the communities on the higher authorities of the party and administration, all Gypsies in the city and Gau of Salzburg were interned in a central camp on the outskirts of Salzburg city. The rural communities were obliged to pay for this "removal" of the Gypsies. In September 1940 all those responsible had realized that "the proposed evacuation of the Gypsies from the Ostmark to Poland" had been "deferred."³² In Salzburg Böhmer became active again. He organized the construction of the Gypsy camp in Maxglan as well as the forced labor details of the camp inmates (autobahn and road construction, regulation of rivers). The camp was opened in late autumn of 1940. It had two watchtowers, a barbed wire fence and was guarded by policemen. Denial of food (food was in any case reduced to a minimum), flogging, and confinement

in the bunker (*Bunkerhaft*) were among the customary camp penalties. In 1940 German film director Leni Riefenstahl recruited a number of camp inmates as extras for her film "Tiefland."³³ Until it was liquidated, an average of 300 to 400 people were living in the Maxglan Gypsy camp.

After it became known that the Gypsy deportations to Poland would not take place, a central Gypsy camp was created in Burgenland as well, on a former Esterhazy estate. Bernhard Neureiter, the *Beauftragter für Zigeunerfragen im Rassenpolitischen Amt der Gauleitung Niederdonau* was instrumental in establishing the Lackenbach camp.³⁴ Neureiter spontaneously organized the camp inmates' forced labor details at Reichsautobahn construction sites and protested the Wehrmacht's slow discharge of Gypsy soldiers.³⁵ In a report of September 28, 1941, Neureiter refers to the zealous cooperation he met among police, Landräte, mayors, labor offices, and leading physicians in planning the camp. The Lackenbach camp was opened November 23, 1940. The camp was administered by the Vienna Kriminalpolizeileitstelle; regular police provided the camp personnel. At first camp inmates, including children, were made to assist in the construction of the camp. Later they were "leased" to private firms and Reichsautobahn construction supervisors.³⁶ Flogging, solitary confinement, and denial of food as punishment were part of everyday life. Terrible sanitary conditions and food shortages characterized a camp where entire families were interned. In the barracks people were packed like sardines; one plank bed had to be shared by several persons. At the turn of the year 1941-42 a typhoid epidemic broke out and cost more than 300 lives. The camp was blocked off and the inmates were left to their fates without medical treatment. From the beginning camps like Salzburg/Maxglan and Lackenbach were regarded as temporary solutions. So Neureiter stated that the Lackenbach camp "must not yet be regarded as a model solution" and that "the deportation of Gypsies from the Gau- and Reichsgebiet must be kept in mind and realized at the proper time." These collection camps were only provisional arrangements which were established after pressure had been exerted by the local bodies assisted by lower and intermediate levels of the party and state administrations. They provided the organization for later deportations to the annihilation camps and also provided good arguments for these deportations, citing the prevailing camp conditions (danger of epidemics, etc.).

While families from Vienna, Lower Austria, Styria, Carinthia, and Burgenland gradually were interned in the Lackenbach camp, there were still Roma and Sinti who were allowed to stay in their settlements—although they were not allowed to leave them—until the end of 1942, the period of *Auschwitz Erlaß*. The *Feststellungserlaß* had been in part based on an individual's work history, whether he had worked regularly for the preceding five years, and this still had some effect on internments in camps like Lackenbach or Salzburg/Maxglan.

Although the German administration of the Łódź/Litzmannstadt ghetto vehemently opposed the deportations planned by the RSHA, a total of 5,000 Gypsies were deported to the Łódź/Litzmannstadt ghetto between the 5th and 9th of November 1941. Two transports, each numbering 1,000 persons, came from the Lackenbach camp. Due to the incompleteness of documentary evidence it is impossible to find out by whose order these deportations were carried out. A decree by the Landrat in Oberwart of November 11, 1941, states that in addition to the sick, the disabled, and the women and children of the Lackenbach camp, even those Gypsies who had still been living in the traditional Gypsy settlements were to be deported to Litzmannstadt.³⁷ In this way the local authorities were saved the work of putting the Gypsies into the Lackenbach camp. In addition the 300 inmates of the Upper Austrian camp in Weyer which had been established on January 1, 1941—they had been recruited for cultivating moorland—were transferred to Lackenbach since they were “destined for evacuation to Litzmannstadt.”³⁸ Clearly Lackenbach functioned as an “emporium” and the deportations to Litzmannstadt enabled the local authorities to carry out the long desired ethnic consolidation (*Flurbereinigungen*)³⁹ with regard to the Gypsy settlements still in existence.

In the Gypsy ghetto of Litzmannstadt conditions were terrible. In December 1941 spotted fever broke out, leading to the deaths of hundreds of people and the murder of the surviving inmates as one of the first groups of victims in the gas van of Kulmhof/Chełmno in December 1941 and January 1942. Nevertheless this was not yet the initial phase of a planned mass extermination of Roma and Sinti. These murders occurred because the ghetto administration had regarded the Gypsies even before their arrival as bearers of an epidemic, as potential rebels and unfit workers, and tried to get rid of them as soon as possible.⁴⁰ Spotted fever offered them this opportunity, though one should not disregard a latent willingness to murder Gypsies as so-called *Untermenschen*.

After the deportations to Litzmannstadt, the Burgenland party and administration believed that they would be able to “reckon with a complete solution to the Gypsy problem within a short time.”⁴¹

The assault on the Soviet Union aggravated Nazi policy against Gypsies as well as Jews. Tens of thousands of Gypsies became victims of mass executions in the east and in the Balkans. Thousands of Polish Roma and Sinti were murdered in the concentration camps of Belzec, Treblinka, Sobibor, and Majdanek. The physical extermination of the German and Austrian Gypsies was launched by Heinrich Himmler’s order of December 16, 1942 to deport all “Gypsies and part-Gypsies” to Auschwitz. “Pure-blood Sinti and Lalleri” were to be exempted from deportation for the time being, a provision disregarded in reality.⁴²

The entries in the illegal prisoners’ diary show that the Gypsy transports from Austria between March and May 1943 were taken to the so-called family camp.

These transports included inmates of the Lackenbach camp as well as Gypsies who had been living in their traditional settlements up to then. The Salzburg camp was dissolved in spring of 1943 and the inmates were transferred to Lackenbach and sent on to Auschwitz.

In the conditions prevailing in Auschwitz no explicit order for extermination was needed, for people died of hunger and epidemics by the hundreds. On May 5, 1944 Arthur Nebe announced, "I will soon make a particular proposal to the Reichsführer concerning these Gypsy people."⁴³ On the night of August 2, 1944, the 2,897 remaining inmates of the Auschwitz Gypsy camp, of a total of approximately 23,000, were gassed. More than half of the 12,000 Austrian Roman and Sinti did not survive the genocide.

Notes

¹Otto Stöger, "Die Zigeuner des Burgenlandes," *Gendarmerie-Rundschau*, no. 4 (1934).

²Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴See Archives of the Federal Republic of Austria, General Security Administration, GZ. 189. 638/1933/34.

⁵Ibid., and see DÖW, file E18518: Report of the District Authority (*Bezirkshauptmannschaft*) of Hallein to the Regional Authority (*Landeshauptmannschaft*) of Salzburg, 31 Dec.1937.

⁶ DÖW, file 11154, Decree by the Landeshauptmann of Burgenland, Dr. Tobias Portschy, 17 Mar.1938.

⁷See Helfried Pfeiffer, *Die Ostmark: Eingliederung und Neugestaltung* (Vienna: 1941). For the development and application of Nazi policies in Germany and Austria, see Sybil Milton, "Nazi Policies Toward Roma and Sinti, 1933-1945," *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* 5, 2 (1992):1-18.

⁸*Wiener Diözesanblatt*, 76, no. 8 (25 Aug.1938).

⁹See, for example, Selma Steinmetz, *Österreichs Zigeuner im NS-Staat* (Vienna: Europa Verlag, 1966); Erika Thurner, *Nationalsozialismus und Zigeuner in Österreich* (Vienna: Geyer Edition, 1983).

¹⁰See DÖW, file 9626, and DÖW, file 10501: Diary of the Lackenbach Gypsy Camp.

¹¹ On February 22, 1950, Tobias Portschy was sentenced by the Graz Landesgericht/Volksgesicht to 15 years' imprisonment; he was pardoned September 3, 1957.

¹²See Tobias Portschy, *Die Zigeunerfrage: Denkschrift des Landeshauptmannes für das Burgenland* (Eisenstadt: 1938).

¹³*Grenzmark Burgenland*, 4 Sept. 1938.

¹⁴*Grenzmark Burgenland*, 14 Aug. 1938.

¹⁵See DÖW, file E18518: Report by the Rural Police (*Gendarmerieinspektion*) of St. Johann im Pongau to the District President (*Landrat*) of St. Johann im Pongau, 12 Jan. 1939.

¹⁶DÖW, file 11291.

¹⁷DÖW, file E20131.

¹⁸DÖW, file 12232.

¹⁹DÖW, file 2307: Order of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Reich (*Reichskriminalpolizeiamt*) to the Vienna Criminal Investigation Department (*Kriminalpolizei - Kriminalpolizeileitsstelle Wien*), 5 June 1939.

²⁰Erika Buchmann, *Die Frauern von Ravensbrück* (Berlin: Kongress-Verlag, 1961): 30 ff.

²¹*Ibid.*

²²For example, *St. Pöltner Anzeiger*, 25 Feb. 1939.

²³See above, or *St. Pöltner Anzeiger*, 14 Jul. 1939.

²⁴Michael Zimmermann, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet: Die nationalsozialistische Vernichtungspolitik gegen Roma und Sinti* (Essen: Klartext, 1989): 43.

²⁵Hans Joachim Döring, "Die Motive der Zigeunerdeportation vom Mai 1940," *Vierteljahrheft für Zeitgeschichte* (Stuttgart) 7, no. 4 (1959): 418-128.

²⁶DÖW, file 2527.

²⁷DÖW, file 17072.

²⁸Zimmermann, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet*, p. 44.

²⁹Döring, "Die Motive der Zigeunerdeportation," p. 48.

³⁰DÖW, microfilm 68.

³¹DÖW, file E18518.

³²DÖW, file E18518: Letter from the head of the Criminal Investigation Department (*Kriminalpolizeileitselle*) of Salzburg, Anton Böhmer, to the head of the Criminal Investigation Department of the Reich (*Reichskriminalamt*), Arthur Nebe, 6 Sept. 1940.

³³DÖW, file E18518.

³⁴DÖW, file E19829.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁷DÖW, file 9626.

³⁷DÖW, file 11293: Decree by the Landesrat in Oberwart, Dr. Hinterlehner.

³⁹DÖW, file 9629, and DÖW file 10501: Diary of Lackenbach Gypsy camp.

³⁹See Hanno Loewy and Gerhard Schoenberger, eds., *„Unser einziger Weg ist Arbeit“: Das Getto in Lodz, 1940-1944. Eine Ausstellung des Jüdischen Museums Frankfurt am Main.* (Vienna: Locker Verlag, 1990).

⁴⁰DÖW, file 11293.

⁴¹Documentation Archive of the Austrian Resistance, ed. *Widerstand und Verfolgung in Wien, 1934-1945: Eine Dokumentation*, (Vienna: Österreichischer Bundesverlag für Unterricht, Wissenschaft und Kunst, 1975), 3, pp. 357 ff.

⁴³See *Hefte von Auschwitz*, vols. 2-8 (1961-).

⁴³Zimmerman, *Verfolgt, vertrieben, vernichtet*, p. 79.

More on the Sibilants of Romani

Eric P. Hamp

Examples drawn from Greek Romani clarify and support earlier findings of the conservatism of sibilants in Romani.

An earlier study (Hamp 1987) demonstrated that Romani preserves the distinctions and important phonetic features of the Indian sibilants with remarkable fidelity. For the most part Gordon Messing's monograph (1988) on Agia Barbara (a dialect of Greece transplanted from Turkey, and therefore lineally to be associated with Paspatis's classic record) agrees well with the testimony which I adduced there, relying heavily on Welsh Romani. This is the more impressive since, even on part of the Agia Barbara evidence, we expect a degree of merger of [s] and [ʃ] in the presence of interference from Greek bilingualism.

In addition to this general agreement Agia Barbara offers us clarification on a number of items which should be added to the dossier presented in the earlier study.

We find some forms which offer a valuably more conservative shape: 'horn' is *šink*, pl. *šingá*, and 'rope' is *šoló*. 'Gold' shows the labial in *somnakál* (no longer in use). The semantics of *bašáv*, 'make a sound' is a fact worth noting. For semantic range we have an informative datum in *breš* 'year' beside *brešín(d)* 'rain'. The sibilant in *xasáv* 'cough' confirms our account and etymology.

One of our troublesome items is confirmed by Agia Barbara: *šut* m. 'vinegar' cannot be Hellenized and agrees with Paspatis's *shut*. This is confirmed again by *šukló* 'sour' (= Welsh Romani *šutlō*, showing the well known reinterpretation of laterally exploded phonological dental as a velar which is familiar to us in prehistoric Latin and in varieties of English; for this Paspatis shows *shutló*).

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An item to be added to the dossier is *paš-* 'near, beside, half' < *pārśva-*.

Finally, we have a splendid Indo-European base in two etyma, but apparently with Hellenized sibilant: *sasúí* 'mother-in-law' < *śvāśrū-*, and *sas(t)ró* 'father-in-law' < *śvāśura*.

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The Effects of State Assimilation Policy on Polish Gypsies

Andrzej Mirga

Between 1952 and 1989 socialist Poland implemented a series of ever harsher policies toward Gypsies. These policies sought the assimilation of Gypsies through the eradication of nomadism and its associated economic adaptations. Using primary data in the archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the author traces the development of Polish assimilation policy and evaluates its results.

During the period termed the Second Republic (1918-1939), Poland was a multiethnic state. According to records of 1931, national and ethnic minorities comprised 36% of the population. These minorities included Ukrainians (16%), Jews (10%), White Russians (6%), and Germans (3%). Small minorities, including Gypsies, accounted for 1% (Kwilecki 1963:86, Buszko 1987:235). During that period Poland never worked out a consistent policy toward its minorities. Rather, the policy changed with various governments, political situations, and overall social climates. It ranged from cultural pluralism and peaceful coexistence to open conflict and coercive Polonization. When Poland gained independence in 1918, the ambiguous positions of the elites of the various minorities with respect to independence, as well as Ukrainian irredentism, fanned Polish nationalist sentiments. As a result minorities felt threatened. Most ethnic problems, which were both historically and politically complex, concerned primarily the largest minorities (Buszko 1987:235-326). In comparison with them, the Gypsies remained marginal. Indeed, during the 1920s the state showed no interest at all in Gypsies.

World War II itself and postwar border shifts caused dramatic changes in the ethnic structure of Polish society. Polish Jews were nearly completely exterminated and a considerable number of Polish Gypsies suffered a similar fate (Ficowski

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1953:162-181, Mróz 1983:10-11). Poland lost its eastern territories along with their populations and gained territories in the west. The new socialist government envisioned building a nationally and ethnically homogeneous state. The implementation of this vision caused massive migrations and resettlements and as a result most of the German, Ukrainian, White Russian, and Jewish populations had left Poland by 1950. Those which remained, together with all other small ethnic minorities, comprised only 450,000 people, that is, 1.5% of the total population (Kwilecki 1963:85-89). Once multiethnic, Poland transformed itself into a nearly mono-ethnic state with an insignificant minority population. Thus the ethnic issue diminished in importance and in fact national and ethnic groups disappeared from the postwar records and demographic statistics. Minorities dropped out, at least officially, from the social and political reality of the Polish state. They did remain, however, in the Polish national consciousness in the form of outdated, petrified stereotypes, images, and phobias (Nowicka 1990:207-210).

In the wake of ethnic homogenization and increasing nationalism, Gypsies began to attract attention. In the view of the state, all other minorities were in the process of being integrated and assimilated (Markiewicz and Rybickie 1967). The Gypsies, however, with their cultural differences and high visibility, were not. Thus the "Gypsy problem" was labeled an "important state task" and given special attention (Egierska and Mrozek 1965:2-3). The overall legal and institutional framework for the implementation of this "task" was set out in a governmental decree in 1952 (Ficowski 1953:181-197).

This decree also established an Office for Gypsy Affairs (Referat do spraw Cyganów). This office was under the rule of the Department of Social Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The data collected by the Office for Gypsy Affairs, after preparation and elaboration, were used by authorities on various levels as a basis for the implementation of policy. The agency ceased operation with the Solidarity break of 1989. I was able to do research on the collection in the Archives of the Ministry at the end of 1989; this article is based on those materials.

Premises and Goals of State Policy toward Gypsies

In the 1950s Gypsies comprised a small, dispersed, and internally divided minority group numbering up to 15,000, 75% of whom led a nomadic lifestyle. The majority of the peripatetic Gypsies were members of the group known in the literature as Polska Roma, followed by Polish Kelderasha and Lovara. The remainder of the Gypsy population belonged primarily to the settled group known as Bergitka Roma 'Mountain Gypsies' (Ficowski 1965, Kaminski 1980).

The legal and political status of the Gypsy minority was not clearly defined. In the view of the state, Gypsies represented neither a nation nor a nationality, nor did they have nationalist ambitions. They were treated more or less as an ethnic group. The 1952 decree referred to them as a "population of Gypsy origin," thus avoiding the formulation of a precise status. "Ethnographically" different as they were, troublesome to the state and society, they were destined to be absorbed by the nation-state. By rejecting the "principle of nationality" in solving the Gypsy problem, the state acknowledged the ultimate goal of its policy, "a deepening of the processes of assimilation," meaning "to subject them to a Polish cultural impact" (Mrozek and Jaworski 1960:7).

The 1952 decree was passed as a transition device intended to lead the peripatetic Gypsies to a settled lifestyle. By design the decree was supportive and its implementation was the responsibility of authorities on all levels. It stipulated precisely the areas in which Gypsies must be helped: housing, employment, child education, health and sanitation, etc. The most important task of the state administrators, however, was to convince Gypsies to give up travel, the dominant feature of Gypsies at that time. Commonly held stereotypes were linked with Gypsy nomadism: parasitism, laziness and dislike of work, criminality, cultural backwardness, threat to social order, etc. In the socialist context, the Gypsies' nomadism was additionally viewed as an unacceptable and anachronistic style of life. This attitude was commonly held both by the authorities and by social scientists (Mróz 1966:186). The state treated the eradication of nomadism as a necessary condition for the integration and assimilation of Gypsies.

Gypsies themselves had not demonstrated tendencies toward inclusion or absorption into Polish society. Nomadism was the most important feature of their identity and the real basis of their subsistence. Gypsy peripateticism, in general, was founded on spatial mobility, self-employment, and occupational, organizational, and cognitive flexibility (Mirga 1992, Rao 1987:1-32). The intentions of the state were antithetical to these features. With the loss of mobility and self-employment, Gypsies became dependent on permanent wage work. Due to a high level of illiteracy, they were qualified for employment only as low-paid unskilled laborers. Comparing the profits of wage labor with those of peripateticism led Gypsies to conclude that what appeared to be state assistance and support was in fact deprivation.

The case of coppersmithing and retinning illustrates how utterly misunderstood the Gypsy situation was. Being linked with nomadism, these trades were viewed as illegal. However, the state's supportive policy towards Gypsies led authorities to legalize these activities as a profession. To practice the trade, however, a Gypsy had to acquire a license and be employed in a coppersmithing cooperative.

Since the cooperatives were directed and audited by non-Gypsy personnel, the status of the Gypsies employed by them did not differ from that of wage laborers. Salaries were controlled from the top, and the monthly wage was far lower than what the workers could earn outside the cooperative. Gypsy coppersmiths were able to fill the cooperative's monthly quotas in a few days, but what were they to do the rest of the time? In accordance with regulations they could take days off at the end of the month. This, however, antagonized the ordinary Pole, who perceived it as stereotypical Gypsy laziness. Or, by treating the cooperative as a front, they could execute the same work beyond the quota to maximize income. However, by so doing they were breaking the law, thereby strengthening other aspects of the Gypsy stereotype. Legalization of the traditional Gypsy profession thus primarily undermined the vital interests of Gypsies (Mirga 1992: 269-270; see also Kaminski 1980).

It became clear that peripatetic Gypsies were rejecting en masse the doubtful benefits of the 1952 decree. This attitude worked to their advantage. Unlike other socialist countries, Poland abandoned forced collectivization after 1956, and Gypsies were again able to lead their traditional lifestyle and to exploit their economic niches.

The state's arguments for Gypsy spatial stabilization, productivization, and child schooling were therefore invalid, persuasion was unsuccessful, and state support was inappropriate. Legislators and administrators had fallen into the trap of ethnocentrism. They had treated the demands of the majority of society as the needs of the Gypsy minority. Such assumptions legitimate any form of assimilation policy, but give no strength to its arguments (Liégeois 1987:366).

From a Supportive to a Coercive Gypsy Policy

The evaluation of the effects of the 1952 decree by the central commission of the Polish Communist Party in January 1960 was by and large negative. Between 1952 and 1960 authorities had succeeded in settling 3,000 to 4,000 nomadic Gypsies. These Gypsies were, however, not considered immobilized. The commission characterized another 4,000 to 5,000 as "half-settled." These continued to live in wagons, were viewed as not permanently employed, and as subsisting on illegal income. According to the commission, nomadic Gypsies numbered between 5,000 and 6,000 (Mrozek and Jaworski 1960:3-4). These counts were estimates. In spite of state efforts and ongoing controls, a full count of Gypsies was not made available until 1964. The commission explained the ineffectiveness of the decree as due to a lack of coordination among authorities on various levels, and on insufficient interest in the problem on the part of Party members. On the other hand, the commission saw the Gypsy *wójt*s, or elders, as an essential obstacle. In its view, the elders sought

to preserve their own power and succeeded in keeping Gypsies under their influence and in convincing them to resist settling. The commission therefore insisted on the necessity of a change in the state's policy toward Gypsies.

The commission proposed a radical and restrictive policy. As a first step, it demanded the consideration of a parliamentary act, modeled on one passed in 1958 by Czechoslovakia, that would settle the nomadic Gypsies permanently (Grulich and Haisman 1986:77-78). This demand was, however, rejected by the government. All the other proposals of the commission were put into practice. The most important directive was to set up guidelines designed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs as a legal basis for halting wandering groups of Gypsies and for their permanent registration. Other directives concerned employment and housing. Authorities were not to allow local agglomerations of Gypsies to form, were to break up existing ones, and were to disperse them throughout the Polish population. Calling it an "acceleration of the settlement and productivization process," authorities put the new policy into practice on March 23, 1964 (Egierska and Mrozek 1965:2).

According to the records, in the spring of 1964 there were 1,146 peripatetic Gypsy families, which represented about 10,000 people. The authorities informed registered Gypsies that from then on wandering was considered a threat to public order and would be punished according to law. Despite this force only 129 families remained in their places of registration. During the spring and summer of 1964 another 360 families agreed to settle. The vast majority, however, 657 Gypsy families, continued to travel (Problemy 1964).

During the next few years the state's increasingly harsh crackdowns began to show signs of effectiveness. In the spring and summer of 1970 only 205 families (1,069 persons) were still traveling, and authorities penalized 100 Gypsies (Dane 1971). In 1976 the number of peripatetic families was reduced to 85 (453 persons), and 7 were penalized (Informacja 1977). In 1983 34 families were still recorded as nomadic (388 persons), and 12 penalized (Informacja 1984).

As these statistics show, the coercive and restrictive policy was effective, and by the end of the 1970s nomadic Gypsies were finally settled. The results of that policy were, however, very superficial.

Schooling was considered an important element of productivization and assimilation of the Gypsies, establishing a source of professional activity and improving the possibilities for wage labor. School was also treated as a means of Polonization. Since Gypsy children were not attending the schools more rigid sanctions were eventually demanded. These sanctions produced superficial corrections. During the 1950s and 1960s only 25% of Gypsy children attended school. The ratio of children's school attendance grew together with the growing rate of Gypsy settlement. In 1970 it reached 82%; in 1983 82.6% of all Gypsy children of school

age were in school (Dane 1971). Despite this relatively high percentage of attendance, the results of Gypsy schooling were insignificant. In 1983, for example, nearly 32% of all Gypsy children who attended school did not perform at grade level; high absentee rates and lack of progress in learning were cited as causes (Informacja 1984).

In the area of productivization, the authorities viewed employment and wage labor as an important element of socialization, or rather resocialization, of Gypsies, leading to their integration into Polish society. The results, however, were insubstantial. At the beginning, when the state outlawed nomadism, the rate of employment increased. There was also a feedback process between employment and housing. Those Gypsies who were employed and were good workers could, according to the authorities, count on better housing and support. Those who behaved incorrectly, lived in their old manner and did not improve their reputations, not only lost the chance for housing but could also be punished. While traveling was forbidden, lack of a wage-paying job not only deprived Gypsies of any source of subsistence but also condemned them to live in wagons. Often wheelless wagons on supports, but with electricity, substituted as housing and did so for over a decade. The outlawing of nomadism thus created new constraints and needs for adaptation. However, this period of transition was very short. In 1970 the rate of employment of Gypsies of working age was very low—26%—and it did not exceed the level of 30% throughout the next two decades (Dane 1971). In 1983 the rate of employment was 26.9% (Informacja 1984). To the authorities this meant that only one quarter of the Gypsies able to work had employment and a legal source of subsistence. According to those statistics, the majority had no source of subsistence or their sources of subsistence were illegal.

The state policies concerning peripatetic Gypsies resulted in the dispersal of wandering groups and consequently in the urbanization of Gypsies. However, these Gypsies were not absorbed into the Polish working class. Gypsies were able to maintain self-employment as a basic feature of Gypsy identity. Prohibition of wandering, the requirement of settlement, and the obligatory schooling of children—these constraints did not result entirely in the spatial stabilization and the eradication of nomadism as a strategy of exploiting economic niches. The Gypsies did, however, change means of transportation and patterns of mobility. For example, from 1980 to 1983 about 750 Gypsy families changed their places of residence, migrating from one district to another; others migrated to other countries (Informacja 1984).

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COMMENTARY

Rom Migrations and the End of Slavery: A Rejoinder to Fraser

T.A.Acton

The hypothesis of the importance of the ending of slavery in stimulating the migration of Rom to the West in the 19th century is reformulated theoretically to accommodate objections and counter-examples brought forward by Fraser. This reformulation links Romani studies to broader comparative debates over slavery, to defend the historical revisionism of Romani intellectuals on the subject.

Introduction

In denying that the Rom migrations of the nineteenth century are solely a flight of newly emancipated slaves from Romania, Fraser (1992) does us a service. Merely showing, however, how an analysis originally made by economic historians has been reduced to a formulaic over-simplification by non-historians, does not offer any alternative explanation. This rejoinder will reformulate the hypothesis about the special importance of the decline and ending of slavery, in the hope of stimulating further research in Gypsy history as an integral part of the economic and political history of Europe. Without Gypsy history there is no proper understanding of European history. Equally, that Gypsy history cannot be understood in terms of any supposed special ethnic Romani characteristics or propensity to migrate, but only in terms of the historical dynamics of exploitation and rejection played out in relations between peoples during the centuries in which the tragicomic incoherencies of the idea of the nation-state have played themselves out.

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The propositions here defended (not all challenged by Fraser) are these:

1) That the enslavement of the Rom in eastern Europe is, together with the genocidal attacks on Rom in other parts of Europe, crucial to understanding Gypsy - non-Gypsy relations in the period between the two great persecutions of the 16th and 20th centuries, and in consequence to understanding Gypsy identity post-1945.

2) That because of the special economic history of Romania, slavery persisted longer in Romania than elsewhere, producing a series of contradictions in the overall status of both slave and non-slave Rom, both inside and outside the territories in which Romanian language and neo-feudalism were found.

3) That changes in the world economy which led to the decline and ending of slavery in Romania, also led to mass emigrations, both of former slaves in Romania to surrounding territories, and of these and other Vlach Rom from those surrounding territories to Western Europe and the Americas, and that the final disintegration of slavery is indeed the trigger which turns the slow diffusion of the Vlach Rom into an international torrent.

4) That the obscuring of the importance of slavery, not only within self-serving European historiography, but also within Gypsy self-presentation, can be understood within a general theory of slavery, and that the efforts of Romani writers such as Hancock and Maximoff to think their way out of this comforting blurring of memory are not a piece of ethnic special pleading, but part of the duty they owe as intellectuals to their own people and the world as a whole.

First, however, there are two points I concede to Fraser:

1) There were emigrations from Romanian speaking territories of distinctive Vlach-Romani groups prior to the collapse of Romanian neo-feudalism. In particular Lovara established themselves in Hungary by the early eighteenth century, and the Djambazi dialect in Macedonia seems a Vlach Romanes dialect in origin.

I think, however, we hardly find Kalderash away from Romanian-speaking territories before 1800. If, however, we postulate the emigrations linked to the decline of slavery as a specifically Kalderash phenomenon, we have to explain why, from the mid-19th century onwards, Kalderash, Lovari and other Vlach Rom migrations appear to proceed very much in tandem, and how the ideology of "the four Rom natsia" is constructed. Part of the explanation of this lies in the second point I concede to Fraser, viz.:

2) "The pace of Gypsy movement to the US paralleled that of general immigration." Certainly, the emigration of East European Gypsies in the half-century before 1914 was part of a broader emigration of subordinated ethnicities, partly pulled by economic opportunities in the New World and partly pushed by persecution. Taking North America alone, parallels between Vlach Rom immigration and, say Ashkenazi Jewish immigration appear obvious; though it is not at all

so clear for patterns of settlement in western Europe, where the major receptor countries might appear to differ.

To sum up: my case is not that all the Rom upped and left Romania in the 1860s; such formulations are justly chastised by Fraser. Rather it is that the emancipation period of 1820 to 1860 fundamentally upset the applecart in Mitteleuropa by unloading so many slaves into the free Rom economy of the area while at the same time stimulating anti-Gypsy racism, and that thus the ending of slavery does mark, and partly, at least, cause the beginning of a new wave of intercontinental migration.

European Romani History

The economic and political history of Romani people in Europe is a story of two great genocidal persecutions and their aftermaths. The first started in the 16th century, continuing episodically for decades in tandem with the transformation of agricultural society in post-feudal Europe. The second appeared until recently to have been more concentrated in the period 1933-1945 but recent events in Romania and elsewhere show us it may not actually be over.

Before 1600, the social structures which had produced leaders who could pretend to social equality with the crowned heads of Europe (Vaux de Foletier 1970: 47) were utterly destroyed. In their place was left a fragmented mosaic: of localized commercial nomadic groups absorbing or even dominated by Gypsies; of enslaved craftsmen or performers; of social bandits, mercenaries and rural refugees or clients of aristocratic patrons. This produced an equal variety of racial stereotypes having in common only their function of marking out these survivors of an unrepented genocide as scapegoats, pariahs or bogeymen.

Romania followed a different economic pattern to the rest of Europe. Situated at the boundaries of the Ottoman empire, from the 16th century the Romanian principalities were kept within the Turkish fold by indirect rule, which encouraged the re-emergence of something similar to medieval feudalism (Stahl 1980). The boyars served the same economic function as medieval barons, providing a military guarantee against the disruption of agricultural production. Stahl shows how, by making offers that could not be refused, the boyars persuaded village after village to accept their suzerainty. Some refused, and remained free villages until the 20th century, and Stahl's fascinating fieldwork on surviving free village assemblies makes comprehensible the way in which the boyars had turned the assemblies of the enserfed villages into something like medieval manorial courts. Decisions were made by the feudal suzerain in council rather than by an assembly of free men, but still associated the moral community of the village with the decision. In other words, the court was not simply the instrument of the boyar's will.

It still represented the authority of the village, subject to the fact that a social contract existed between boyar and village whereby the latter surrendered its autonomy and its surplus value in return for protection. Stahl's account of the village assemblies inevitably brings to mind the *kris* among the Vlach Rom today, as an embodiment of communal authority and adaptation.

Stahl sharply distinguishes the servitude of the peasants (in which the boyars owned the peasants, but the peasants still owned the land) from the chattel slavery of Rom. Stahl's pupil, Gheorghe (1983) hypothesizes a possible origin for Romani slavery within Romanian neo-feudalism, but in fact Romani slavery existed within Europe some centuries earlier (Hancock 1987). More importantly Gheorghe shows the congruence between post-16th century Romanian society and the continuance of slavery. Chattel slavery continued to exist and flourish within Romanian neo-feudalism because the craft and distributional work of the slaves was not subject to competition from free labor or independent entrepreneurs. This neo-feudalism constituted itself in the borderlands between the Muslim/Orthodox east and the Catholic/Protestant west. The actual shape of Romanian slavery (and serfdom) must thus be contrasted with both the development of ethno-religious Rom communities elsewhere in the Ottoman empire (and, essentially, among the Polish/Lithuanian Rom) and the pariah status to which Gypsies were reduced in the post-reformation nation-states of western Europe.

This is not to say that Romania was then always a "land of Pain" for Gypsies. Within the Ottoman empire, as within the Byzantine, Roman and ancient Greek polities that preceded it, slavery was a defined and moral status. It was subject to the restraints embodied in Islam in the concept of *halal* slavery, which may be seen to have had conceptual roots in ancient Greek ideas concerning slavery as a moral way of dealing with a defeated enemy. Slavery is often very oppressive and individual outrages by the powerful against the less powerful, which occur in any category of human relationship, may be little inhibited by law or custom. Nonetheless, their economic importance often makes slaves valued and valuable individuals, (even though the subject of ethnic stereotypes and kept at a social distance). But when slavery isn't working anyway, when slaves no longer hold their value, then their conditions become especially intolerable, and they themselves may become odious to their masters.

This degeneration of slavery occurred in Romania in the 19th century as neo-feudalism gave way to capitalism. This change was an eddy in broader currents of economic history. The steam engine both transported the products of capitalist enterprise around the world and brought American grain to change forever existing agricultural systems in Europe. In England free trade shook out the traditional farmers, and their clients, producing Europe's first majority urban Gypsy popula-

tion. Elsewhere protectionism artificially preserved rural society, but changed its political basis. Steam trains and ships also transported peasants and others no longer needed in rural European economies to the new world to become workers or petty producers.

Panaiteanu (1941) shows how the market in slaves collapsed as their services were made redundant by imports paid for by export of timber and other output from a newly capitalist agriculture. Slaves could be worked as unskilled field labor, but the cost of supervision was greater than the difference between a slave's upkeep and the wage of a free laborer, once the latter had been created by the emancipation of the servile peasantry. The compensation of the boyars in 1855-56 may have been meager, but they probably would have cast off their slaves within a few years anyway. The relative importance of "the declining viability of slavery" and of "the spread of liberal ideas from France" remains a banal difference of emphasis between Marxist and non-Marxist commentators.

The human fascination of the emancipation of the Romani slaves, repeated by Fraser, is thus undisputed; what is at issue is its significance. Fraser asserts that Vlach Rom left Romania in large numbers long before, and that the migration of East European Rom to Western Europe and America must be seen as part of the great economic migration of other peoples at that time, and that the episode of slavery and its ending is not particularly important. It only becomes so because it was dramatized by Gypsylorists, and perhaps subsequently by Gypsy politicians crying up their suffering past. Even if we accept that those slaves who escaped or were liberated, or turned off the land in 19th century Romania were primarily the Kalderash, why did so few arriving immigrants in the West claim Romania as birthplace? Why is the Kalderash self-image, especially in North America, that of a people eternally and primordially nomadic, with institutions that it is difficult (following Williams 1984) to reconcile with a posited history of slavery of which the people themselves appear largely unaware, (though in the Argentine Kalderash community there are stories of the time of "*robimos*" [Jorge Bernal, personal communication]).

Fraser suggests that the solution is that perhaps most of the Vlach Rom who appear to have so strong and archaic a social structure never were slaves, but rather just were nomads, who traveled further once international frontiers opened. Though cautiously understated, his most dramatic evidence in support of this thesis about the end of slavery as a special-pleading-reconstruction of history are the contradictory quotes from Matéo Maximoff, who in his 1947 writing denied any slave ancestry, but claimed it proudly in 1959.

Theories of Slavery

This is a strong case; but we must consider it in the light of comparative studies of slavery. Fraser himself notes the parallel situation in the mid-nineteenth-century in North America, where agricultural capitalism was also extending itself. Following Williams, Fraser points to dissimilarities between Kalderash and Black people in North America. I shall argue that the dissimilarities of cultural continuity are perhaps less than might be supposed and are explicable in terms of specific historical factors. Although there are a number of sharp (but non-coincident) dichotomies in slavery studies, the more slavery is studied, the more instances are asserted of continuing socioeconomic effects being masked by the social reconstruction of history. Perhaps the most generalized example of this, from one of the leading synthesists of slavery studies, is Patterson's (1982: 29) pleasing anti-Marxist conceit that so far from slavery being explicable as a property relationship, the very concept of property itself was abstracted by Roman law from the social practice of slavery in pre-existing Roman society.

Three dichotomies appear to me important in the literature: between those who see violent suffering in slavery as normal, and those who see it as exceptional; between Marxists who see a material base for slavery, and non-Marxists who offer political or cultural explanations; and between essentialists who see slavery as one institution reappearing in different societies and pragmatists who see it only as a term marking the similarity of certain forms of labor relations in very different societies.

First, however, let us note that, as for Romania, so for the US there is an established critique of the "spread of liberal ideas" explanation of the end of slavery, which cuts across the Marxist/non-Marxist divide. Those who emphasize historical sources showing the antebellum suffering of the slaves can argue that the slavedrivers on the great cotton plantations, represent not the apotheosis, but the destabilization and decay of the slave system. The extent of such suffering has, however, been at the heart of theoretical and documentary disputes in the study of US slavery (Rose 1982, chapter 11). But even Genovese (1969), a neo-Marxist who emphasizes the social and human accommodation often produced within slave relations of production, argues that, despite the prosperity of the 1840s, southern intellectuals had to produce ideological criticisms of free labor, suggesting that a kind of economic corporatism which progressively regulated the labor of white as well as black workers would be necessary to protect slave agriculture. The war between the states was not started in order to liberate the slaves, but in response to the secession of the South, a secession without which the South could not have sustained their peculiar institution.

Marxist accounts of 19th century slavery and the role of the competition of free labor are also sometimes thought to be undermined by debates over the relative importance of ideology, economy, war and politics conducted over slavery in ancient Greece and Rome. Finley argues, against Anderson's Marxist account, that freedom and democracy paradoxically advanced hand in hand with slavery, and therefore the question as to whether the Greek economy was "based" on slavery is a misplaced question; slave production paralleled free production. The existence of the competition of free labor cannot therefore be said always to lead to the ending of slavery.

This is not, however, a precise counter-example to Marxist accounts of the ending of 19th century Black or Gypsy slavery. The effects of competition between slave and free on small scale craft labor are rather different from those on mass unskilled labor. Where we get mass slave labor in later Roman society, or in mining, it was where there was not competition with free workers, where conditions could generally be kept tolerable enough to avoid revolt. (This was the transition that the civil war prevented the American South from making.) In fact, Finley's anti-Marxist economic-historical approach might seem to have more in common with the cautious Marxism of Stahl, Panaitescu or Genovese than any of these have with the essentialist, self-proclaimed Marxism of Anderson.

Finley begins to develop a psychology of slavery in his discussion of the failure of abolitionism to take hold in Greece. His pragmatic account of the economic circumstances of stable systems of slavery helps locate the contrasts between the ancient world and the 19th century. One example may particularly assist understanding of the aftermath of Romanian slavery.

The example comes from Locris, the Greek colony in southern Italy, where descent was said to be matrilineal, an anomaly which Aristotle explained historically. The reason, he said, was that the colony was originally founded by slaves and their children by free women. Timaeus wrote a violent protest against this insulting account, and Polybius, in turn, defended Aristotle in a long digression, of which unfortunately only fragments survive. One of his remarks is particularly worth quoting:

To suppose, with Timaeus, that it was unlikely that men, who had been the slaves of the allies of the Spartans, would continue the kindly feelings and adopt the friendships of their late masters, is foolish. For when they have had the good fortune to recover their freedom, and a certain time has elapsed, men, who had been slaves, not only endeavor to adopt the friendships of their late masters, but also their ties of hospitality and blood; in fact their aim is to keep them up even more than the ties of nature, for the express purpose of thereby wiping out the remembrance of their former degradation and humble position, because they wish to pose as the descendants of their masters rather than as their freedmen (Finley 1983: 113-114).

Anyone who knows any Kalderash must feel a start of recognition at these words. True, those in the West do not pose as Romanians (though they have used their titles, such as “voevode” and we cannot know the extent of “passing” in Romania itself) but they surely have sought to wipe out the remembrance of their former degradation. All the modern Vlach Rom in the West, and the Kalderash in particular, have a mythical oral history of themselves which presents themselves as eternal nomads, licensed to that vocation by stories such as that of the theft of the fourth nail at the crucifixion. Doubtless many Kalderash in America are sincerely ignorant of any real history of slavery.

Bearing these psychological factors in mind, the contradiction between Maximoff (1947) and Maximoff (1959) is no longer a puzzle, but in fact an exemplary illustration of the post-slavery dilemma. In 1947 we have the young Maximoff, only recently liberated from a Vichy concentration camp, and having only learnt to read and write as a young adult, stoutly defending the honor and status of his *viṣa* to outsiders, essentially by laying claim to the heritage of the Lovara (“from Hungary”), rather than that of the Kalderash (“from Romania”). This is Maximoff-as-Timaeus. By 1959 we have Maximoff-as-Polybius. He has read voraciously in a personal quest for truth which has led him through Catholicism towards the Pentecostalism which he adopted in 1960. He has had to come to terms with the failure of *Le Prix de la Liberté* to repeat the popular success of his first book *The Ursitory* despite much greater effort, much of which went for nothing after the publishers’ excisions. This is a Maximoff for whom it is the truth that sets one free, rather than worldly social status.

We cannot, however, rest content with reclaiming the history of slavery. Even if we now reject some of Elkins’ answers, we still have to ask his questions about the social psychological aftermath of slavery. What happened when these people who were no longer valued even as slaves in Romania, came into neighboring countries? They brought with them a stigma of slavery which they sought to shed by acting in the same way as, and laying claim to the status of, the free Rom, especially any free Vlach Rom, such as Lovara and Machvaya in those neighboring countries (cf. Ficowski 1990: 31-35). The contrasts adduced by Fraser between Kalderash and Lovari dialects support this differential chronology of Kalderash and Lovari entry into Hungary. But even though they may have sought to act so, they were poor, numerous refugees—exactly the category that provokes the most vicious reactions within the morally impoverished mindset of nation-state societies. Such racist reactions would hardly have stopped to distinguish between one kind of Gypsy and another. These processes did occur at the very time when economic displacements had led to xenophobic pressures on other minorities such as Jews to emigrate, and transport had become more freely available; but we may see that it is

not an illusion that the emigration of emancipated slaves had altered the whole atmosphere for Rom in Eastern Europe, and marked a change for the Vlach Rom from a slow process of dispersal to much more rapid westward migration.

Cultural Consequences

If we have now reconstructed a more plausible economic and psychological account, which also explains why so few Rom migrants to the West gave Romania as their country of origin, we still have to deal, point by point, with the ethnographic problems which Fraser draws from Williams.

I suggest that the Kalderash managed so rapidly to become a conservative traditional tribal migratory society after emancipation because they had the Lovara as a model. Perhaps we might compare with the way the more successful New Age Travelers in England adopt Romanichal cultural motifs today even as they have learnt modestly to disclaim Romani ethnicity. "Caste mobility" is also well-known in India.

How then did the Lovara bring their institutions through slavery? If they were slaves, their slavery certainly ended much earlier. I shall also argue below, that some of distinctive contemporary Vlach Rom culture may be considered as partly generated by conditions of slavery. Incidentally, we might also ask why, if freedom is the condition of cultural conservatism, the Romungri and Gitanos are not less acculturated.

The comparison with the "devastating effect slavery had on the customs" of transshipped African slaves (even if we were to accept Elkins' overstatement of it) is also less telling than Fraser supposes. The transshipped African slaves were originally from very different ethnic groups and language communities, not from basically similar, and inter-comprehensible language communities like the Rom.

It has been suggested, however, that Anglophone Afro-Americans have in fact preserved features of late medieval West African coastal society. The actual enslavement was carried out mostly by slave-traders of the West Coast of Africa. It is suggested by the "Monogeneticist" tendency among scholars of Atlantic English-based Creoles, that most Creoles from New York Black English down to Sranan are derived from a single English-African pidgin developed as a contact language among diverse communities on the West Coast of Africa. Subsequently it was used as a lingua franca by African slaves who had no other common language, and by their purchasers who wished to make themselves understood. So paradoxically, we may see in "Anglophone" New World Black communities considerable cultural continuity with the 16th century colonial seaboard, whose cultural heirs speaking Krio also exist in Sierra Leone today.

Fraser's assumption that social organization and family relationships must have been fatally disrupted by the kind of terrible disruption of domestic life to which Kogălniceanu (1837) and others bear witness cannot be sustained. Kogălniceanu's account comes from the period of disruption of slavery by encroaching capitalism. Doubtless there were isolated atrocities in earlier periods, (as there are also in feudalism and capitalism) but if they had been the rule rather than the exception, they would hardly have been consistent with the efficient exploitation of slaves. The disruption Kogălniceanu describes is consistent with the attempt to extract maximum value (including realizing the remaining capital value) from a declining asset which it no longer pays to see reproduced. This is consistent with Panaitescu's argument, and it also accords with Maximoff's folk tradition of the last days of slavery being a period of dramatically worsening conditions.

The debate over the conditions for the reproduction of the slave labor force exists not only in relation to US slavery, but was also carried on in another form by the ancient Greeks, as Finley reports in his account of the way in which the mythical sin of Chios in initiating slave-breeding provided an ideological excuse for transcending moral arguments that slaves should be captured or bred, rather than purchased. In each case for society to reproduce itself, the slave population must (a) also be reproduced and (b) be differentiated from free people. The preservation of a differentiated slave culture is therefore a factor sustaining rather than undermining the preservation of the slave/slaveowner social contract.

Preeminent among sustainers of both personal identity and social distance are cleanliness practices. Gypsy concepts of propriety are, apart from their language, their most apparent Indian heritage. Indeed, despite variety of detail in the symbolic cultural incorporation and function of these taboos, they are more widespread than either the use of the Romani language or self-identification as Gypsy/Romani, as witness their presence in Irish Traveler culture. I once met at a conference a university lecturer who remembered straining his own marriage during its first month as he enforced *mochadi* regulations on his wife, even though at the time he had been unaware of his own English Gypsy ancestry. His grandparents had settled and his father had become, of all things, a town planner. The penny never dropped until one day when he challenged his father over his knowing but ambivalent attitude to the design of a Gypsy caravan site. If *marimos* avoidance can survive the loss of language and even the knowledge of Romani heritage, it could surely survive slavery even if nothing else did.

The other two institutions which Fraser mentions, the *kris* and the brideprice are perhaps cases where we can, by contrast, see the heritage of the years in slavery embodied.

The miraculous re-embodiment of the Indian panchayat in the Romani *kris* has perhaps been almost taken for granted—but then what do assemblies of village

elders to settle problems look like anywhere? As noted above, the *kris* also resembles the Romanian village assemblies reported by Stahl, especially in the etiquette of non-interruption and determination of property, inheritance and other disputes. We cannot look at the *kris* without seeing how well it would fit into the system of rural governance, of patronage and resistance to patronage, of an equality of opinion which had absolutely to accommodate itself to the immovable realities of power, in neo-feudal Romania.

The brideprice can hardly be posited as a cultural continuity with India. It may be possible to find isolated examples of a brideprice system among commercial nomadic groups in India, but the great majority of Indian nomads, as of Indians, have a dowry system, which is the very reverse of a brideprice. Indian society is as patrilocal as Rom society, but whereas in Rom society the money goes in the opposite direction to the bride, in Hindu society the money goes in the same direction.

Could this reversal of the direction of the payment be an effect of slavery? If the slave wants a wife from elsewhere, won't a payment have to be made, transferred against the loss of services rather than in favor of gaining status from the husband (whereas in India, the lower the bride's status relative to the husband, the higher the dowry must be). In making the payment himself, rather than soliciting it from his owner, the father of the bridegroom asserts once and for all that he has superseded his former owner as master of the family.

Conclusion

Gypsies' position as the ultimate non-citizens, pariahs, and scapegoats across five centuries of European history, defining the limits of the citizenship of others is a phenomenon which European nationalist histories and the synchronic mythical reconstructions of Romani oral history alike conspire to bury. The attention given to slavery by Romani writers like Hancock and Maximoff (1955, 1959) cannot, therefore, be written off as a mere leap aboard a bandwagon of suffering minorities. It is an important revision of history not only against professional non-Gypsy historians' tendency to marginalize the question of Rom slavery to the exotica of Gypsylorism, but also against the discourse constructed during the last hundred years among the Rom themselves. A slave past does not have to be buried. The earliest Jewish literature explores a slave past; a similar recognition at the birth of Romani literature is vital, not only to produce an enduring and constructive Romani communal politics, but also in searching for those general truths which can set us free from national and ethnic oppressions.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Gypsies. *Angus Fraser.* The Peoples of Europe. Oxford: Blackwell (108 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1JF, UK; 238 Main Street, Suite 501, Cambridge, MA 02142, USA), 1992. 359 pp. £19.99; \$24.95 (cloth). ISBN 0-631-15967-3.

Leonardo Piasere

With a truly classical title, the author of *The Gypsies* presents a new book on the history of the Gypsies, or better, on anti-Gypsy history in Europe. The work is not revolutionary in the sense of proposing a new slant on the reading of Gypsy history. Apart from using the term “peripatetics,” a concept of recent coinage—a use the author hardly persists in—the book would appear to be fairly traditional. “Gypsiologically” speaking the closest historiographer to Fraser seems to be de Vaux de Foletier, a fact that from my point of view does not earn the former a great deal of merit. The text follows a chronologically linear evolution of disarming simplicity and the nine chapters refer to nine distinct historical periods; it begins with “Origins” (chapter 1) and finishes with “Modern Times” (chapter 9).

Despite all I have said above, I believe this book to be the best on the history of the Gypsies I have ever read. I shall try to explain the reasons for this judgment.

The book is based essentially on bibliographic sources (archival sources are scant and limited to Great Britain). The references are numerous but not excessive. One gets the feeling that the author has hesitated to quote some of his sources in order to render the reading less oppressive—one therefore imagines bibliographic research far more extensive than the works actually cited. Though the bibliography cited thus seems to be the tip of an iceberg, it is the characteristics of this tip which help us to understand the range of the author’s reading. A closer look reveals almost 400 works (384 if I am not mistaken) in 18 different languages. A little more than 50% are in English, but both French and German are well represented (each to the

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order of about 13-14%). Then we have Spanish, Latin, and Dutch, each varying from 2% to 4% of the total. The remaining 11 languages cover about 8% of the sources mentioned. This already gives us a good idea of how the bibliography is distributed linguistically speaking, but we get an even better impression if we look at the language groups. About 70% are Germanic languages, 25% Romance or Latin, and the Slavic and Finno-Ugric languages each represent about 1% to 1.5%. I am using these figures not to define the author's linguistic capabilities, but in order to demonstrate the geographical boundaries of the book. Of course there is no precise ratio between bibliography and geography; for example, not all works on modern Greece have to be written in modern Greek. The distribution does, nevertheless, reflect fairly adequately the content of the book, which essentially takes into account central and western Europe.

From a qualitative point of view, I would say the bibliographic section is simply excellent. In the text (p. 198) Fraser quite rightly shows his esteem for what are probably the two greatest Gypsiologists of the 19th century, Paul Bataillard, a French historian, and Franz Miklosich (or Franc Miklošič), a Slovenian linguist. It is with great pleasure that I found no references to the books on "the Gypsies" by that trio Block-Bloch-Clébert, who have had such a negative influence on popular Gypsiology over the past decades. Conversely, and again with great pleasure, we find alongside the more up-to-date titles works by 19th century authors such as Harriot, Kogălniceanu, and Schwicker, that have undeservedly fallen into oblivion, while other more famous works, such as Colocci's book, have been mentioned merely in order to be justly criticized. For the rest, I honestly find it difficult to judge the selection for each country in detail, though as far as Italy is concerned the author has cited exclusively and with great accuracy only authors who have carried out direct historical research. Thus, if such a criterion has been used throughout the bibliography, one can understand my choosing the bibliographic section as a point of departure for a general appraisal of the book.

"This is the story of a wandering people which arrived in the Balkans in medieval times and gradually spread over the entire continent of Europe and beyond." We can see from the very first lines how Fraser faithfully follows the Gypsiological post-Grellmannian tradition that considers the Gypsies as a people of Indian origin, distinct from other nomads of autochthonous origin. To these "other peripatetic fringe groups" the author dedicates a few pages towards the end of the book (pp. 295-298). I will not deal with the pertinence of this clear-cut distinction here, as I have explained elsewhere (Piasere 1993) that since the term "Gypsy" is a Wittgensteinian cluster concept, any classification, however paradoxical it may seem, can be valid. What I want to bring to the fore is the fact that once he accepts this distinction the author describes the history of the relationships between the Europeans and these groups of exogenous origin with coherence and

acumen, often giving us enlightening interpretations of single facts or documents, renowned or not, that add significance to the book. It is not my intention to comment on these details, nor to relate the few passages I do not agree with. I intend instead to maintain an overall appraisal of the book.

The impression one gets having read the whole book is that, through the description of anti-Gypsy history, it is really dealing with the history and experience of power. In such a context the Gypsy presence is fundamental rather than accidental, because only the Gypsies could act as litmus paper in demonstrating the characteristics of non-Gypsy power. The Gypsies have never had political power in Europe and have never had—in contrast with other minority groups—representatives among the economic, financial, academic, or intellectual elites. They were the only ones who could “denude” the non-Gypsies with their mere presence, compelling the latter to a transparent demonstration of their modes of exercising power for power’s sake. This “denuded” power is different from the “naked” power that anthropologists find outside Europe in the so-called “societies with Big Men.” In the latter we have a “naked” power because it is always impotent, given that the societies in question have no coercive institutions that embody the power. “Denuded” power, on the other hand, is impotent despite the presence of coercive institutions, because it fails to involve everyone in the command/obey mechanism. The frustration of a “denuded” power is then transformed into brutality. This impotent power, capable only of slaughtering small or great numbers of Gypsies, yet incapable of constraining them to the command/obey mechanism, is evident throughout Fraser’s book, with a few important exceptions.

In the pages dedicated to the Balkan and Carpathian countries we find a different anti-Gypsy Europe. There appears to be no impotent anti-Gypsy power, or if there is, its impotence is not very apparent. Here we have an anti-Gypsy power like a “normal” power, based on a command/obey relationship, which materializes in an equally normal relationship of economic exploitation. This part of Europe, where today 60-65% of the entire Gypsy population of Europe is found, is of course the part that saw the insertion of the Gypsies into the systems of slavery and servitude and later into those of proletarianism. This Europe is on the whole mentioned relatively little in the book and here we come to terms with the linguistic-bibliographic limits mentioned above. Nevertheless the references used for this region are without doubt significant. They are often works that deal with the politico-economic relationships between Gypsies and non-Gypsies in the period of modern history (the famous article by Panaitescu, various articles on the tax system, etc.). In this Europe during Ottoman rule “one finds within this Empire no counterpart to the systematically repressive legislation which Gypsies faced in the rest of Europe” (p. 173), and within the same Empire the less a group was inserted into the systems of slavery or servitude, the more freedom of movement they had.

The impotent power of non-Balkan Europe can be illustrated by the case of Spain, which was successful in driving out the Jews (1492) and the Moors/Moslems (1492, 1502), but not the *gitanos* despite numerous interdictions dating from 1499 (p. 100). A further example can be found in the Germanic states, where 133 anti-Gypsy decrees were issued between 1551 and 1774 (p. 150) at a rate of 0.59 per annum. I shall here add the figures for Italy: 209 anti-Gypsy bans between 1493 and 1785 at the rate of 0.71 per year. The strange thing is—and I think it deserves further research—that the two anti-Gypsy Europes seem to have taken parallel courses which did not change with the change of rulers. In other words it is not necessarily the Ottoman rule which made the fundamental difference, but rather certain socioeconomic or cultural characteristics of southeast Europe which remain to be ascertained. Fraser, indeed, points out how certain anti-Gypsy decrees issued by the Hapsburgs were not systematically applied in Hungary, where Gypsy labor was in demand (p. 156). The situation becomes even clearer if we look at the Venetian Republic in the 15th century. While the Gypsies were accepted in the Republic's Greek colonies, where they were part of the feudal structure, their plight was completely different in the mother country. He also correctly recounts that the first decree issued against the Gypsies by the Venetian Senate dates back to 1540 and this is certainly the earliest documented ban in our possession. However, other sources of the period tell us that Venice had already issued decrees against the presence of Gypsies in its home territories in the second half of the 15th century, thus becoming pioneers for Italy in this kind of "sport" (see Foresti 1483). In short the two Europes remained distinct even when governed by the same rulers.

Chapter 4, "The Great Trick," is perhaps the best chapter of this excellent book and refers to the period 1407-1430, in which we find the first appearances of "Egyptians" in western Europe. It is the most accurate reconstruction of these events that has ever been attempted and it precisely this reconstruction that can help us to better understand the difference between the two Europes. Faced with the classical problem of the "dukes" and the "counts," and so forth, of "Little Egypt," the author demonstrates not only how their presence cannot be doubted, but also their existence in the contemporary communities of southeast Europe, such as Greece. Here the Gypsies were part of the social hierarchy and the leaders (the "dukes," etc.) seem to be essentially the guarantors of this affiliation. They submit to the non-Gypsy power and demonstrate their submission by paying taxes they have collected from the Gypsy community. We are faced with a normal situation of dominator/dominated in which the flow of wealth goes from bottom to top (i.e., from the subordinate communities to the principal authorities) and thus takes the opposite direction to the power, which descends from top to bottom. It is true that also in the western European chronicles we come across these leaders as mediators between

Gypsy and non-Gypsy communities, but their function is inverted. Their task would seem to be that of guaranteeing a flow of wealth that originates from the principal authorities and goes to benefit the communities they represent. This situation, where the flow of goods follows the same direction as that of the power, i.e., from top to bottom, is typical of gift-based economies, and in particular of those societies which favor economic redistribution. In short, it seems that the first "Egyptians" tried to set up a kind of distribution relationship in a society in which the mercantile relationship was already becoming dominant. The distribution from the principal authorities to the Gypsy communities was obviously not direct, but consisted in the latter's acquiring goods from the subordinate non-Gypsy groups. That is why Fraser rightly insists on the importance of the safe-conducts, letters of protection, papal bulls, etc., whether or not these documents were authentic. They were juridical forms in force in their times, which guaranteed access to a territory and the consequent acquisition of goods in the name of the potentate whose signature appeared on the document. The latter distributed goods to the Gypsies in two ways; first, by inviting towns and cities to give alms, and secondly, by preventing the non-Gypsy law enforcement authorities from punishing any eventual crimes committed by the Gypsies (especially in relation to crimes against non-Gypsy property).

Given the pyramidal structure of both the temporal and the spiritual powers, the higher the ranking of the potentate, the larger the economic territory at the Gypsies' disposal. With a safe-conduct from a duke one had access to his territories; with an imperial safe-conduct, one had access to the entire Holy Roman Empire; and with a papal bull one had access to all of Christian Europe.

If I am not mistaken in my reading of Chapter 4, one can quite easily understand the epilogue, an epilogue which has lasted ever since. The Gypsies never managed to get their gift economy accepted in an economy that was structured more and more along mercantile lines. This does not mean they were unable to set it up, but that the conditions were extremely difficult. The ethics upon which the two types of economy are based can, in fact, survive side by side only in extremely conflicting circumstances. "What is clear is that, when it was deployed, even the most pious burghers found increasing difficulty, after the first few visits, in mustering enthusiasm for succouring these pilgrims" (p. 128). Patience is a quality highly influenced by the cultural environment, and the Europeans lost theirs quickly regarding those "Egyptians" who refused to enter the mechanism of dominance/submission. From such a point of view, Fraser is once again right when he says that "Gypsies represented a blatant negation of all the essential values and premises on which the dominant morality was based" (p. 129). The peoples *sin vergüenza*, as Pitt-Rivers calls them (1971), suffered the terrible reactions this book tells us about. It seems they were ready to accept a naked and impotent power, but they were never allowed to. They could only "denude" a power which reacted ferociously and won many

battles, but failed to win the war. "Traditional," Pentecostal, or nationalistic, the Gypsies are still here today, neither subordinates nor leaders, willing to undergo hardships we could never bear, so as to be able to deride, shameless as they are, all the non-Gypsies who think they are comfortably sitting well upon their own bottoms.

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Neue deutsche Zigeunerbibliographie. *Joachim S. Hohmann*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang (Jupiterstr. 15, CH-3000 Bern 15, Switzerland; 62 W. 45th St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10036, USA), 1992. 260 pp. 85 DM; \$57.80 (paper). *Studien zur Tsiganologie und Folkloristik*, vol. 8. ISBN 3-631-44843-0.

Angus Fraser

Joachim Hohmann points out in his preface that a comprehensive Gypsy bibliography like Black's (1914) is nowadays virtually unthinkable, owing to the sheer volume of material. He selects three areas for special treatment. First (pp. 13-141) there is a bibliography which aims to include all publications in German on Gypsies, other than literary works, and also some material published in other languages by Germanophones. Such has been the escalation in the volume of print that the 38 years 1954-91 take up as much space as the four and a half centuries 1499-1953. Then comes (pp. 143-232) a listing of material in the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society* up to the end of Volume 1 of the Fourth Series in 1978. The final section (pp. 233-59) gives a rapid survey of the evolution of German writing on Gypsies.

Hohmann invites readers to notify him of any omissions or errors, in preparation for a second edition. I propose to consider the possible scope for general improvements. This may unfortunately leave a carping impression; but I hope that

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the previous paragraph will already have indicated more positively the utility of what is on offer in the book.

The first two sections are laid out in chronological order. Such an approach has the advantage of exhibiting the historical development in the treatment of the subject. On its own it also entails some inconveniences as compared with the alphabetical classification which is more common (but which is here used only within years). One has to recognize, however, that to complement one with the other would have added a considerable number of pages to a book which is already 260 pages long, and not cheap.

There are, on the other hand, some possible refinements with less far-reaching implications. In the section dealing with German-language writers, it is not difficult to spot gaps, particularly in the early centuries. Sometimes the gap is real, and will need to be filled if opportunity offers; sometimes it is no more than a vagary of the choice of edition, and can be solved by more rigorous citing of the earliest edition, so that an important writer like Aventinus, whose chronicle was published in 1554, does not wait until 1710 to be listed. But even the year of first publication may be no guide to the time when a writer was active. Hermann Cornerus, to whom we owe the earliest account of the Gypsies' arrival in western Europe, completed his chronicle about 1435, but it was not published until 1723; while Andreas Presbyter Ratisbonensis, another major witness, wrote the relevant entries in his diary in 1424-33, but they were not published until 1763. It is of course the year of publication that determines the general impact of a work. It would none the less be useful to have, at least in important cases, a reminder under the year of composition, cross-referring to the year of publication.

To create a little room for maneuver, some of the existing entries might be weeded out. The net seems to have been spread too widely, given the stated objective. Dutch, Flemish and Swedish scholars writing in Latin can have only a marginal place at best within the concept of *deutschsprachig* bibliography. People like Volaterranus, Bodinus, Pasquier and Muratori have surely none at all. Another field where more consistency would be welcome is penal legislation. Hohmann includes almost a score of anti-Gypsy edicts in his bibliography, within the period 1596-1774. Later he remarks that 146 were issued in Germany between 1497 and 1774. This figure is obviously derived from Scott Macfie (1943), but Macfie stressed that his list "makes no claim to being exhaustive." The truth of that is illustrated by the fact that four of Hohmann's entries are not in Macfie. It would be extremely useful to have a more complete muster in an area which is poorly treated by Black and every other bibliographer. To start out along this path as Hohmann does but then give up, a fraction of the way along it, is disappointing.

It is in the second section, dealing with the *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, that the limitations of the chronological classification are particularly evident. To have all the articles listed year by year is useful in its way, but it would be a less laborious finding aid if supplemented by even a rudimentary integrated index based on authors' names and major subject headings. As regards coverage, the conventions appear to change as the list progresses. Perhaps different hands were involved. In some years, reviews and notes and queries are itemized; in others they are ignored; in others again there are simply page references for the omnibus headings "reviews" and "notes and queries." The convention regarding German-language material in the *JGLS* also varies; sometimes it is included in the first section as well, and sometimes not. Since it is relatively sparse, it may be possible to aim for comprehensiveness in both, despite adding to the consequent duplication.

The third section of the book is somewhat arbitrary in what it chooses to consider. For no obvious reason, rather more than four of its 20 pages of narrative (and one of its illustrations) are devoted to an anonymous publication of 1664, *Zwey nützliche Tractätlein*. This slight pamphlet did contain a few variant interpretations of early Gypsy history, and to that extent is something of a curiosity, but it is little more than that. Perhaps it has been given prominence here in the belief that it was hitherto unknown. It could easily be missed in Black, but it is there, as item 3290 (p. 142), and also in the Scott Macfie catalogue (Yates 1936: 109). If it has received scant attention in the past, that is probably because it had much less influence on thinking than some other treatises published around the same time.

I mention one further area where there is room for improvement. As often as not, the source of illustrations is not given. There is one in particular, with a bare caption "English Gypsies in the twenties," that leaves me looking for some means of dispelling my doubts.

Finally, as this volume is the eighth in a substantial series, *Studien zur Tsiganologie und Folkloristik* (ISSN 0936-6598), it may be of interest to record the previous titles:

1. Joachim S. Hohmann. *Verfolgte ohne Heimat: Geschichte der Zigeuner in Deutschland*. 1990. 194 pp. 59 DM; \$35.80. ISBN 3-631-42293-8.
2. Engelbert Wittich. *Beiträge zur Zigeunerkunde* (J. S. Hohmann, ed.). 1990. 236 pp. 64 Sw Francs; \$45.80. ISBN 3-631-42308-X.
3. Martin Block. *Die materielle Kultur der rumänischen Zigeuner* (J. S. Hohmann, ed.). 1991. 292 pp. 84 DM; \$56.80. ISBN 3-631-43185-6.
4. Joachim S. Hohmann. *Robert Ritter und die Erben der Kriminalbiologie: "Zigeunersforschung" in Nationalsozialismus und in Westdeutschland im Zeichen des Rassismus*. 1991. 624 pp. 98 DM; \$57.80. ISBN 3-631-43984-9.
5. György Szabó. *Die Roma in Ungarn: Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte einer Minderheit in Ost- und Mitteleuropa*. 1991. 220 pp. 63 DM; \$41.80. ISBN 3-631-43786-2.

6. Hans-Dieter Niemandt. *Die Zigeuner in den romanischen Literaturen*. 1992. 331 pp. 89 DM; \$58.80. ISBN 3-631-43665-3.
7. Jerzy Ficowski. *Wieviel Trauer und Wege: Zigeuner in Polen*. (Roland Schopf, ed.). 1992. 235 pp. \$49.80. ISBN 3-631-44347-1.

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Index to Series 5, Volume 3**Titles**

- Az erdő anyja. Cigány mesék, hagyományok*, Károlyi Bari, book reviewed by Katalin Kovalcsik, 45
- The Effects of State Assimilation Policy on Polish Gypsies, Andrzej Mirga, 69
- Ethnic Awareness and the School: An Ethnographic Study, Mary E. Andereck, book reviewed by John Kearney, 48
- The Gypsies*, Angus Fraser, book reviewed by Leonardo Piasere, 91
- The Gypsies and Traditional Bulgarian Culture, Vesselin Popov, 21
- Men's and Women's Storytelling in a Hungarian Vlach Gypsy Community, Katalin Kovalcsik, 1
- More on the Sibilants of Romani, Eric P. Hamp, 67
- Neue deutsche Zigeunerbibliographie*, Joachim S. Hohmann, book reviewed by Angus Fraser, 97
- Persecution and Annihilation of Roma and Sinti in Austria, 1938-1945, 55
- Rom Migrations and the End of Slavery: A Rejoinder to Fraser, commentary, T. A. Acton, 77
- Sinclair Meets the Rom, chronicle, Albert Thomas Sinclair, edited by Sheila Salo, 35
- Le věšeski děj. Az erdő anyja című kötet eredeti, cigány nyelvű szövegei*, Károlyi Bari, book reviewed by Katalin Kovalcsik, 45

Authors

- Acton, T. A., 77
- Andereck, Mary E., 48
- Bari, Károlyi, 45
- Fraser, Angus, 91, 97
- Hamp, Eric P., 67
- Hohmann, Joachim S., 91
- Kearney, John, 48
- Klamper, Elisabeth, 55
- Kovalcsik, Katalin, 1, 45
- Mirga, Andrzej, 69
- Piasere, Leonardo, 91
- Popov, Vesselin, 21
- Sinclair, Albert Thomas, 35
- Salo, Sheila, 35

Subjects

assimilation, 69
 Austria, 55
 bibliography, 97
 Bulgaria, 21
 ethnicity, 48
 etymology, 67
 Europe, 91
 history, 35, 55, 69, 77, 91
 Holocaust, 55
 Hungary, 1, 45
 language, 67
 migration, 77
 19th century, 77
 performance, 1
 phonology, 67
 Poland, 69
 policy, 69
 popular culture, non-Gypsy, 21
 Rom, 35
 Romania, 77
 slavery, 77
 storytelling, 1
 tales, 1, 45
 Travelers, 48
 20th century, 35, 55, 69
 United States, 35, 48

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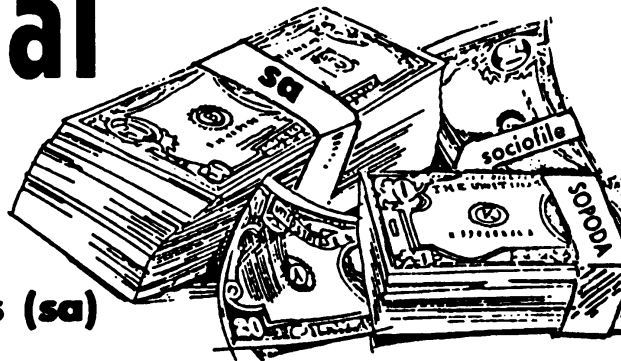
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